Fernando on NPA hit list for 'oppressing' vendors

Story on PAGE A21

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MALAS...
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LANG YAN!

Baby boom seen before Goat year

BEIJING—Maternity wards in the Chinese capital are seeing a baby boom as women rush to give birth before the Year of the Goat, which is believed to bring lifelong bad luck.

BABY/ A7

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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  SPORTS/A18
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Tuesday, January 28, 2003 ★ 48 pages / 3 sections / vol. 18 / no. 51 P15
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Joma rejects peace offer

CPP says draft pact means surrender

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr., *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*, **Martin P. Marfil and Carlito Pablo**

LUCENA CITY—Even before they received a copy from the government panel, communist rebels rejected a draft of a peace accord that President Macapagal-Arroyo had approved in the hope of ending the 34-year insurgency.

"Its much-touted draft for a 'final peace agreement' is nothing more than a demand for the surrender of the principles and weapons of the NPA (New People's Army)," Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), said in an e-mail statement from Utrecht, the Netherlands, where he is on exile along with other CPP leaders.

Sison is a chief political consultant of the the CPP's political arm, the National Democratic Front, in the stalled negotiations.

Malacañang has not disclosed the contents of the draft prepared by the government negotiating panel led by Silvestre Bello III, but according to a Reuters report, the draft calls for the dissolution of the NPA as an armed group and requires the rebels to swear their allegiance to the government. In exchange, the guerrillas will enjoy absolute amnesty and be given livelihood assistance to ease their return to the fold.

"Upon signing of this accord, a cessation of hostilities throughout the country shall commence," the draft says, according to Reuters.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes described the draft of the peace accord as a "last-ditch" effort to achieve peace with the communists.

"This is our last card," Reyes

JOMA/ A16

More blood to flow, says Ka Roger

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon
Bureauand Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

LUCENA CITY—More will suffer the fate of Romulo "Rolly" Kintanar, former chief of the New People's Army who was gunned down on Thursday by his former comrades, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) warned yesterday.

"All the traitors to the revolution cannot escape from retribution. Sooner or later, every traitor will fall and pay for his blood debts to the people and the revolution," CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said.

"Revo [revolutionary] justice is revo justice. They can escape and hide, but they can't escape and hide forever," he added. "Look at what happened to Kintanar."

The CPP on Sunday owned responsibility for the killing of Kintanar who, it said, committed numerous crimes against the revolutionary movement and the peo-

MORE/ A17

Red leaders afraid Rolly knew too much

By Nathan Gilbert Quimpo

(Editor's note: The author is a former member of the Mindanao Commission and International Department of the Communist Party of the Philippines. He wrote this commentary from Australia where he is finishing his doctorate.)

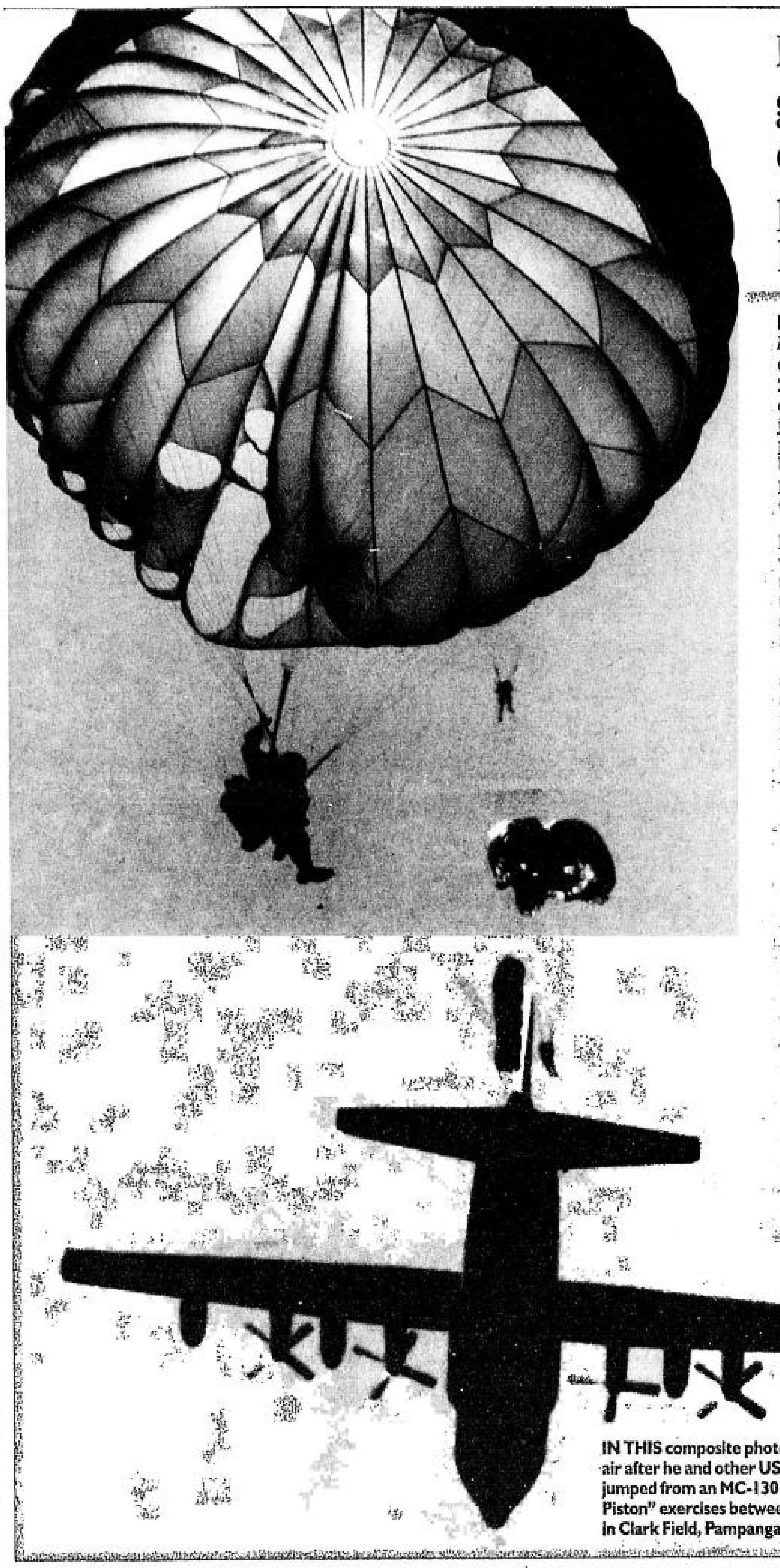
COMMENTARY

THE Communist Party of the Philippines has acknowledged killing former New People's Army chief Romulo "Rolly" Kintanar, claiming he deserved capital punishment for his "criminal and counterrevolutionary acts."

Was that the real reason for his assassination?

It is true that the NPA under Kintanar did engage in kidnapping, armed bank robberies and holdups. But such activities went on for a long stretch of time—even during the periods when Kintanar was behind bars. This would indicate

RED/ A16



IN THIS composite photo, a US paratrooper glides in the air after he and other US Special Operations members jumped from an MC-130 plane at the start of the "Balance Piston" exercises between American and Filipino soldiers in Clark Field, Pampanga. AP/DENNIS SABANGAN

RP-US war games start; exercise not prelude to Iraq hostilities

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—Some 500 American soldiers participating in this year's first joint exercises between the Philippines and the United States, which began Monday, are not due for deployment to Iraq, a US military official said.

"We don't anticipate that. We are here to garner some great training with our Philippine counterparts and that's what we are focused on," Master Sgt. Michael Farris, US spokesperson of Balance Piston 03-5, told reporters here.

Even so, Farris said the soldiers, all members of the US Special Operations Pacific Command, were prepared for any eventuality.

"One of the hallmarks of the US Special Operations is the ability to gather our stuff, and get up and get out of town. We are prepared to do that and if we need to do that, we can," he said.

Balance Piston, which runs for three weeks in Clark and in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, has "no relation to any world event," he said.

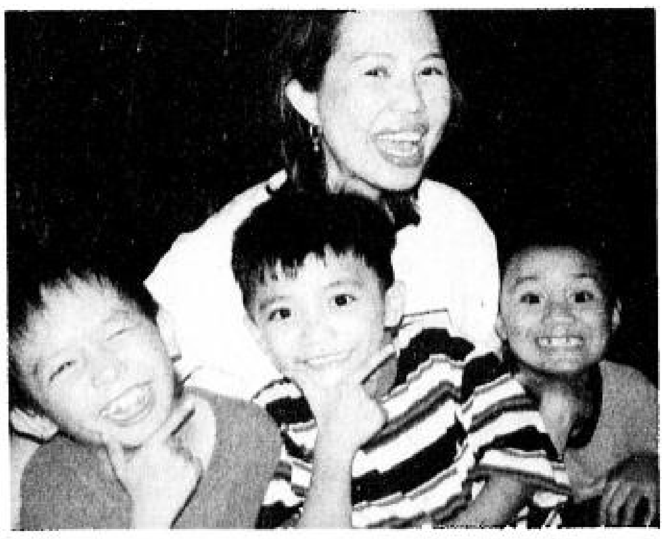
"US servicemen will do whatever they are asked to do. If that is what is in the cards, then that's what we are going to do. Right now, we are concentrating on Balance Piston," he said.

The exercise, Farris said, was planned two years ago. He added that the Bayanihan, a security assistance training scheduled in Zamboanga City next month, was also independent of other exercises held under the Visiting Forces Agreement.

"This exercise absolutely has nothing to do with any other opera-

RP-US/ A16

People with cancer discover hope in spirituality



TESSA SALAZAR

DR. Rachael B. Rosario with some of the children of Munting Paraiso, (from left) Darwin Caluntag, Joshua delos Santos and Jerick de Guzman.

By Tessa R. Salazar

(First of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

AT THE MUNTING Paraiso of the Philippine General Hospital's Cancer Institute, Dr. Rachael B. Rosario is not only a pain management specialist and anesthesiologist.

She is also a source of hope for the 100 to 150 children who are under observation or are being treated there. The youngest patient is a 6-month-old baby; the oldest is 18.

Rosario is a cancer survivor. She was 15 when she was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma—the same cancer that felled ramp model-teacher Patricia Borromeo.

After 18 months of chemotherapy and one month of radiation therapy, doctors had declared Rosario free of that cancer. She is, however, still at risk for other kinds of cancer.

Rosario has been in remission for 25 years. She credits her personal triumph to a combination of traditional modes of treatment (radiation therapy and chemotherapy) and prayer.

"Spirituality is what will make a person wake up in the morning and say, 'Hey, I'm going to eat well today, exercise a little, and I'm going to go out and enjoy whatever I see around me. I'm going to see my doctor and have my chemotherapy. I'm not going to give up because there's hope that I might get better'," she said.

Seeing Rosario each day brings hope to the children-patients.

"It gives them so much hope when they see someone like me who survived (cancer). Some of them tell me that they want to become doctors someday," she said.

Rosario and 18 children from Munting Paraiso were among the 5,300 people who attended a prayer rally at the Tanghalang Francisco Balagtas at the Cultural Center of the

PEOPLE/ A17

Here a moo, there a moo? Cloned cows!

PARIS—Scientists have produced the world's first genetically modified, cloned cows whose milk is intended for food, a breakthrough that could be the next controversy to embroil the biotech business.

A team in New Zealand says it has produced a herd of nine duplicate, transgenic calves whose milk boosted yields of two types of proteins, called caseins, by up to 100 percent.

The two key proteins are a boon to dairy manufacturers because they help liquid cheese to solidify and they also drive off whey, a watery byproduct that is unwanted in the curdling phase of cheese-making.

The researchers, led by Goetz Laible at the Ruakura Research Center in Hamilton, North Island, say the technique, if taken out of the

HERE/ A17

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/28/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONT PAGE

GMA, Sultan meet but fail to discuss Iraq

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and the visiting ruler of Brunei, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, agreed yesterday to strengthen security and anti-terrorism cooperation, focusing so much on bilateral issues that they ran out of time to discuss the Iraq crisis, Malacañang officials said.

Iraq was to have been one of the key issues to be discussed by Bolkiah and Ms Macapagal.

Bolkiah, the head of the tiny but oil-rich Muslim nation, arrived on Sunday for a four-day state visit.

But after initially issuing a joint statement calling for diplomatic efforts to forestall a United States-led strike on Iraq "in the interest of world peace," Malacañang said later the two leaders never got to the subject.

"The joint statement was prepared ahead of the meeting," Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said.

"It was supposed to be discussed, but they ran out of time," he said.

The backtrack immediately had conspiracy theorists examining the statement for possible points of conflict, but the two leaders only expressed hope "that the parties concerned with the situation in Iraq would exhaust all diplomatic and peaceful means in addressing the issue."

"There is no spin in that recall," said foreign affairs assistant secretary Antonio Rodriguez.

"The revised statement only reflects what transpired during the meeting. Since it was not discussed, it should not be there in the statement," he said.

Both nations have been cooperating with the US in cracking down on regional terrorist networks. In August, the US signed a sweeping new anti-terrorism treaty with Southeast Asian countries aimed at substantially upgrading security in the region and exchanging intelligence.

A longtime US ally, the Philippines has said it would only support a United Nations-approved military action against Iraq.

Yesterday, militant protesters, wearing skeleton masks, burned a US flag in front of the tightly guarded US Embassy to oppose Washington's plan to wage war on Iraq.

Ms Macapagal and Bolkiah agreed to strengthen security cooperation, officials said.

She also welcomed Brunei's desire to join later this year a Southeast Asian anti-terrorism coalition, which she had initiated at the summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Brunei two years ago.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia are the countries that have acceded to the Agreement on Information Exchange and Establishment of Communication Procedures.

Ms Macapagal and Bolkiah said they regarded the agreement as a "significant step" in forging a regional response to terrorism in Southeast Asia.

Under the agreement, the Philippines hosted a multilateral simulation exercise from Jan. 14 to 16.

Both leaders also agreed to activate a defense cooperation accord that was signed during the President's state visit to Brunei in August 2001, and convene this year a joint commission tasked with planning and monitoring the two nations' joint activities. They are to hold joint naval exercises in April in Brunei. *AP with a report from Dona Pazzibugan*

HIS Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah salutes the colors at welcome rites at Malacañang yesterday, with President Macapagal-Arroyo at his side.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO

ME embassies placed on 'heightened alert'

By N. Bordadora

THE COUNTRY's foreign embassies in the Middle East have been placed on heightened alert after authorities perceived that recent events could trigger full-scale war in the region this week.

The government has set several alert levels based on which a plan for the evacuation and relocation of some 1.5 million overseas Filipinos in the region would be activated.

One of the trigger events was the scheduled meeting yesterday of the United Nations Security Council to discuss a report to be submitted by the UN inspection team headed by weapons expert Hans Blix.

"We have given the embassies the heightened alert status in the past several days. If we go one slot higher, then this is it. This is the highest as far as the third (alert) level is concerned," said Ambassador Roy Cimatu, head of the country's Middle East Preparedness Team.

For some of the embassies, this would constitute a signal to act based the contingency plans given to them, said Cimatu who met with his team at the Department of Foreign Affairs yesterday to fine-tune the plans.

"The highest level of alert means (our countrymen) are prepared with their pieces of luggage and suitcases. They would have contacted the transport facilities that they have arranged," said Foreign Assistant Secretary and MEPT vice chair Reynaldo Parungao.

"The embassies have advised the Filipino communities to be on their toes," Parungao said.

He said many Filipinos were just waiting for final instructions, "whether to move, relocate or congregate in designated areas where they would be picked up by various teams."

The MEPT identified the most critical countries as Kuwait, Iraq, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

"We continue to monitor events in the Middle East through the reports sent in by our posts," Cimatu said.

Other events expected to spark the long-expected armed conflict include the general elections in Israel scheduled for Tuesday, the meeting of the UN Security Council on Wednesday, and the summit between US President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair on Thursday.

"(A) serious breach as alleged may be a trigger for military action. That is the reason why we are waiting for developments," Parungao said.

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, who is in Brussels for the Asean-EU ministerial meeting, is expected to meet with the foreign ministers of Britain, France and Germany to convey Philippine concerns over long-term peace and stability in the Middle East.

The three countries are members of the UN Security Council.

Bomb found in Greenhills mall

ALERT police officers yesterday foiled an attempt to bomb the Virra Mall Shopping Complex in Greenhills, San Juan.

Supt. Eduardo Lorenzo, San Juan police chief, said a bomb-sniffing dog and its trainer detected a small improvised pipe bomb during a routine check shortly before 3 p.m.

The bomb was in an abandoned stock room between an appliance store and a popular Japanese fast food chain.

Lorenzo said the dog, a golden retriever, found the bomb in a plastic bag, rigged to an improvised electronic device. He said the bomb would have caused only minor damage, but the ensuing panic could have harmed many shoppers.

Responding members of the Eastern Police District bomb squad disarmed the devise as security guards led mall goers to safety.

Lorenzo said the bomb was sent to the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory for final disposition. *Nelson Flores, with a report from AFP*

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Erap son moves to block access to bank accts

SAN JUAN Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito yesterday moved to stop state prosecutors from including his Urban Bank accounts as evidence in the plunder case against his father, jailed ex-president Joseph Estrada.

Showing up without a counsel at the Sandiganbayan, Ejercito accused government lawyers of violating the bank secrecy law for obtaining initial data on his accounts with the now defunct bank.

In a statement, he decried the move as "pure political harassment." Prosecutors were after him, he said, because they could not nail the former president even with about 60 witnesses already presented. In an interview with reporters, he chided the prosecutors for going on a "fishing expedition."

Ejercito asked the special Sandiganbayan division for 10 days to file a motion to quash the pleading to subpoena his UB records. He wasn't a co-accused in the case, he said, and he wished to get his own lawyer.

The court gave him until tomorrow.

Prosecution asked the anti-graft court last week to summon records pertaining to a trust and savings accounts under Ejercito's name.

Senior State Prosecutor Alex Padilla said previous hearings had cited checks issued from Ejercito's accounts as among those that were deposited in the P3.2 billion Jose Velarde account, alleged repository of Estrada's ill-gotten wealth. The requested subpoena cited a total of eight checks worth P184 million.

The court has postponed tomorrow's scheduled hearing till Monday.

Ejercito's bank records are among the last pieces of evidence that the prosecutors intend to present before resting their case. *Volt Contreras with Nelson Flores*

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Lawmakers act to beat 'launder' law deadline

By Christine Avendaño

THE HOUSE of Representatives yesterday moved swiftly to introduce changes to the Anti-Money Laundering Law amid threats of sanctions if the country failed to meet a Feb. 12 deadline.

The House bank, justice and economic committees jointly endorsed the amendments sought by the executive department without major changes and the chamber will start plenary debates on them tomorrow, said Rep. Jaime Lopez, banking committee chair.

Floor debates

The Senate has already approved the amendments at the committee level and is now conducting floor debates.

Lopez said the House committees had agreed to lower the deposit threshold that banking regulators may examine to P500,000 from P4 million.

Banks would also be required to report to the AML Council, the law's monitoring body, any "suspicious transactions" regardless of the amount.

The AMLC will also have the authority to examine any deposit or any investment with any financial institution even without a court order.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the country's banking regulator, will also be allowed to examine deposit accounts that were opened even before the 2001 law was passed.

The amendments will become law if the House and the Senate as a whole endorse them and President Macapagal-Arroyo does not veto any provision.

The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the international watchdog on money laundering dominated by wealthy countries, warned that these amendments must be in place by Feb. 12 to address what it said were glaring loopholes in the law that was passed in 2001.

The FATF has warned that failure to comply would force its member-countries to impose sanctions against the Philippines.

Central bank Governor Rafael Buenaventura said "the law as amended by the committees appears to be satisfactory."

"We're quite happy and grateful to the members of the committees who have worked overtime on this," Buenaventura added.

'Fair'

Misamis Oriental Rep. Oscar Moreno, chair of the economic affairs committee, said the proposed amendments were "fair" and were needed to correct the deficiencies cited by the FATF.

But he warned that there were provisions in the amendments that would probably meet resistance during the floor debates.

Indeed, committee members Reps. Imee Marcos and Celso Lobregat raised objections to some of the proposals, particularly the category of suspicious transactions.

For a transaction to be considered suspicious, banks are asked to look out for certain circumstances. These include the client not being properly identified and the amount involved not being commensurate with the business or financial capacity of the client, among others.

Suspicious

Marcos, daughter of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos whose estate is tied up in multiple court cases of unexplained wealth and economic plunder, said she found the definition of suspicious transactions too broad.

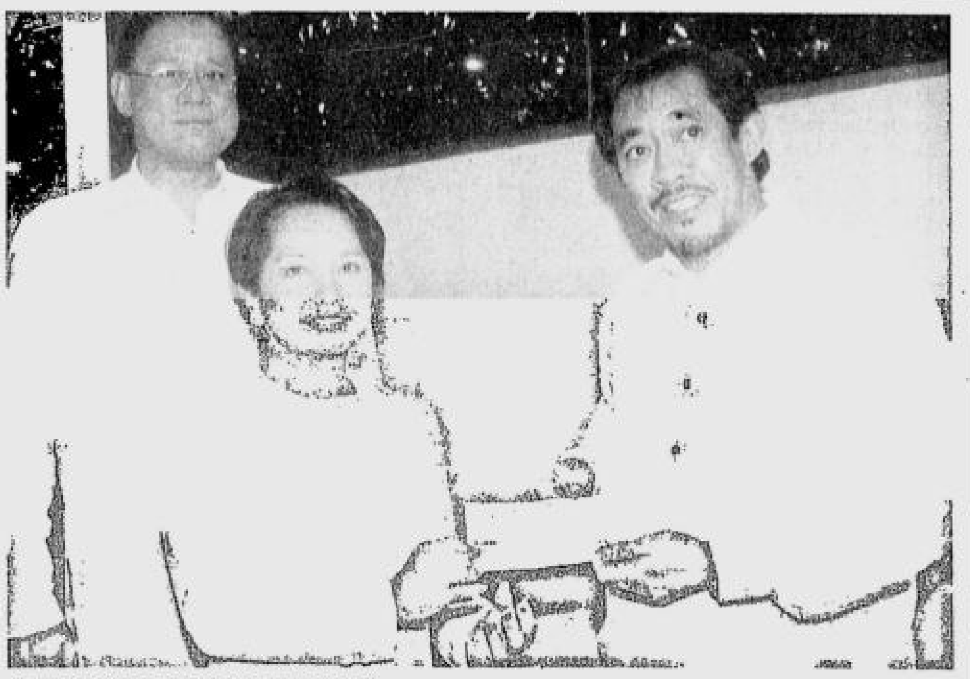
She claimed the provision could work against the interest of overseas Filipino workers, particularly when they remit large amounts of money, say, for the purchase of a house.

Lobregat, who left while the executive session was going on, aired much the same objections, adding that he was concerned that legitimate depositors might be negatively affected.

Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said the opposition would seek a clarification of the amendments that were adopted.

Padilla said they would press for safeguards for legitimate depositors. He noted that there were apprehensions the amendments would be used for "political harassment."

Lopez, however, said the AMLC would be issuing guidelines for the law's implementation which would serve to clarify the amendments. *with an AFP report*



A TRICKLE FOR COCO TILLERS
PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo hands over a check for P700 million representing the interest of the coconut levy fund to Noel Cabrera, chair of the UCPB Finance and Development Corp. The money is to go to the 164,000 farmer-members of the fund which is now estimated at over P130 billion. The fund has been tied up in litigation for years between the coconut tillers and businessman Eduardo Cojuangco. Looking on is presidential adviser Dodi Limcaoco. MALACANANG PHOTO

Drug prices up despite gov't claims, solon says

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

CURRENT prices of drugs for hypertension are guaranteed to make the blood boil. They could also take an asthmatic's breath away for a good long while.

Sen. Teresa Aquino Oreta yesterday revealed that the cost of medicines for heart ailments and asthma rose by between 5.2 and 26.7 percent from March to November last year, contrary to claims by the Department of Health that these drugs are now available at lower prices.

Oreta said a check done by her office showed that the price of 20-mg Ticlid, a drug used to arrest high cholesterol levels, rose from P72.20 per tablet in April 2002 to P79.25 in June, P87 in November, and P91.50 in December.

Imdur Durule tablets, used in the prophylactic treatment of *angina pectoris*, cost P24.70 per 60-mg tablet in March and P26 in November.

Pritor, used to treat hypertension, cost P35 per 40-mg tablet last March; now they're at P40 each. The price of one 1.25-mg of Tritace, for high-risk cardiovascular patients, also went up from P22 last March to P24.75 in June.

The DOH claims that these drugs are available at lower prices at select government hospitals and some private outlets as part of President Macapagal-Arroyo's "GMA 50" project.

"This claim has been contradicted by a check on the current costs at the country's biggest retail outlet, Mercury Drug, which reflected disparities of between P2.10 and P41," Oreta said.

At best, she said, the DOH list did not match the price tags. She noted that a 250-mcg inhaler to relieve asthma (Beclomethasone), for instance, at P831 according to the DOH website, was being sold at P872.

"Low-income families are already reeling from rising prices of commodities," Oreta said. "The least the administration could do is make quality health care and treatment affordable."

Likewise, the senator urged Malacañang to launch aggressive diplomatic efforts to persuade the European Union to scrap its proposal to restrict a global plan that would supply poor countries with inexpensive medicines.

Rich and developing countries have failed to resolve their differences in talks aimed at ensuring access to cheaper drugs for countries with health problems like AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

A year ago, World Trade Organization (WTO) members agreed that poor countries could ignore international patent rules protecting the earnings of multinational drug firms, and seek cheaper, generic remedies.

But under pressure from the giant pharmaceutical companies, the EU, US and Switzerland are pressing for a tighter definition of "health crisis," virtually limiting it to AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

Washington specifically insisted that the scope of epidemics covered by the plan be limited, dropping ailments like asthma and diabetes.

The talks bogged down.

To break the impasse, the EU suggested the intercession of a third party, possibly the World Health Organization. Trade Secretary Mar Roxas has strongly opposed this, saying it restricted the capability of WTO members to determine what constituted public health problems that necessitated access to cheap drugs.

Protest vs Liban growing

"WE WANT our souls, our integrity back."

Thus declared employees of the Technical Education Skills Development Authority (Tesda) yesterday during an hour-long noise barrage to demand the ouster of Dante Liban as the agency's director general.

Sonia Lipio, president of the Tesda Association of Concerned Employees, said only Liban's resignation would pave the way for a "genuine healing process" at the agency which has been rocked by accusations of mismanagement and corruption.

Yesterday's noise barrage was the first in a series of protest activities aimed at pressuring President Macapagal-Arroyo to step into the controversy and kick out the top officials of Tesda.

Tesda-Ace has started a signature campaign among the agency's employees nationwide to solicit support for the ouster call.

Employees were particularly up in arms over Liban's hiring of 30 "neophyte" contractuals to handle sensitive operations such as the issuance of artists' record books, the Filipino performer's "working visa."

The new employees were said to be from the second district of Quezon City where Liban used to be the congressman.

Liban is also facing charges before the Ombudsman over allegedly exorbitant fees being charged performers under a new regulation covering the screening of entertainers.

Six operators and owners of testing centers in Metro Manila filed graft charges against him and two other Tesda employees with the Ombudsman.

The complainants were Antonio Halili, Bessie Clemente, Ricardo Cajucom, Sylvia Neri, Jose Bello and Nestor Laceda.

In a joint affidavit dated Jan. 21, they alleged that Liban and his consultants, Larry Galgana and Vic Jose, collected P125 per talent tested in their centers.

The fee was on top of the P800 being charged the talents by the testing centers. The new charge was not accompanied by a written circular or order to support its collection, they said.

Liban has dismissed the graft charges as "baseless and fabricated."

"Tesda is authorized to increase the testing fee from P800 to P1000. [The charge] was simply meant to harass me," he said. *Christian Esguerra and Blanche Rivera*

Pangasinan town police force cited for returning ₱10M in cash, jewels

By Martin P. Marfil

THE POLICE force of a small Pangasinan town got a big boost yesterday when it was given a plaque of recognition and held up for emulation for the exemplary honesty of its members.

The award, the third given to the police force of Sison town for the same deed, was received by police chief Supt. Alfredo Bascao.

The police force was cited for returning about P10 million in cash and valuables belonging to two people who died in a car accident.

On Jan. 4, Bascao and six members of the Sison police force—Guillermo Alcaide, Napoleon Velasco, Ildefonso Diolazo, Porfirio Madrid, Cesar Salvador and Florence Murao—had each received a Philippine National Police Commendation Medal from the regional command.

The plaque of recognition from the provincial police office said the "exemplary honesty" shown by the police force's members was deemed worthy of emulation.

"We are very happy, there is high morale, this is actually the third award given to us," Bascao said after receiving a second plaque during flag-raising rites yesterday at Camp Crame.

One of his daughters, 22-year-old Donna said: "I'm so proud of him. He's my father."

The Sison police were mainly commended for securing the site of a car accident on Dec. 26 .

The car, a Jaguar sedan, was a complete wreck. Two of the passengers were declared dead on arrival at a hospital.

The Sison police unit that responded was cited for returning to relatives of the victims a brown leather bag and a large quantity of jewelry.

The relatives later claimed that the bag had contained P10 million.

According to Bascao, shortly after the accident, a police officer called them and warned that the car's passengers, the owners of the Liberty Bank in Bulacan province, were carrying millions of pesos in cash.

"We secured the area, brought the victims to a hospital and returned the cash and jewelry intact," Bascao said.

Plaque of Recognition

POLICE Supt. Alfredo Bascao shows off the award after flag-raising rites at Camp Crame. JOAN BONDOC

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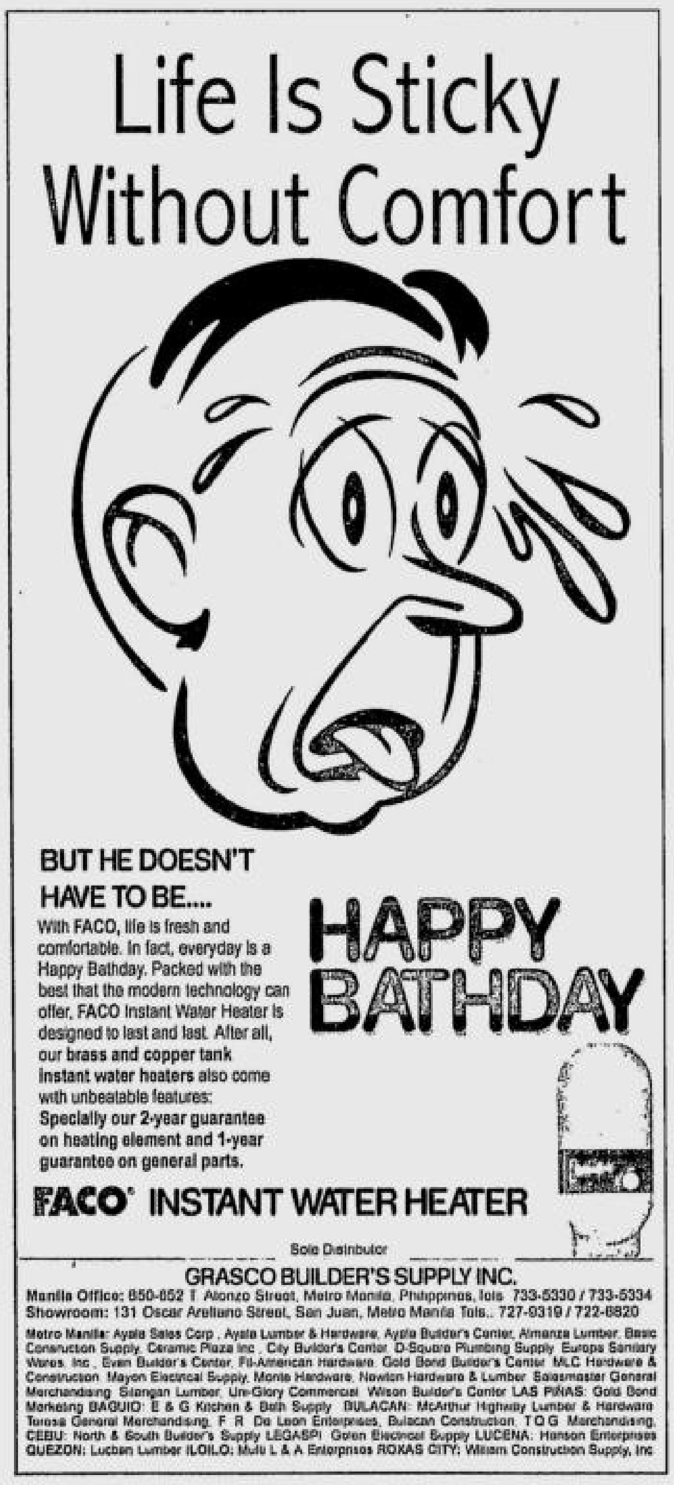
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Population control plan to continue despite Palace retreat

THE POPULATION Commission (Popcom) is pushing through with an aggressive population control program even after Malacañang announced on Saturday that it was dropping such a plan.

In a telephone interview, Popcom Director Tomas Osias said the agency is launching a "door-to-door" campaign nationwide to promote the use of birth control methods—both natural and artificial—in this predominantly Catholic country.

"To reach the Filipino poor, we must bring the information and services on population control to their very doorstep," Osias told the INQUIRER.

To do this, he said, Popcom would tap local governments, health clinics and nongovernment organizations.

In line with the "principle of informed choice," he said, they would bring to the people information on the advantages and disadvantages of both the contraceptive and natural family planning methods.

Asked if the agency would do what Novaliches Archbishop Teodoro Bacani advised them to do, that is, point out the abortificients among the contraceptives, Osias said the matter was best left to the Food and Drug Administration to determine.

Asked if Popcom was pursuing the population program on orders of Malacañang, he answered in the negative.

"It just so happens the program is in line with our objective to strengthen population control," he said.

Last Saturday, President Macapagal-Arroyo backtracked on her plans to push for an aggressive family planning program amid questions and fears raised by church officials, including Bacani.

At the opening of the recently concluded Fourth World Meeting of Families, the President pointed to the strong correlation between poverty and high population growth. *Armand N. Nocum*

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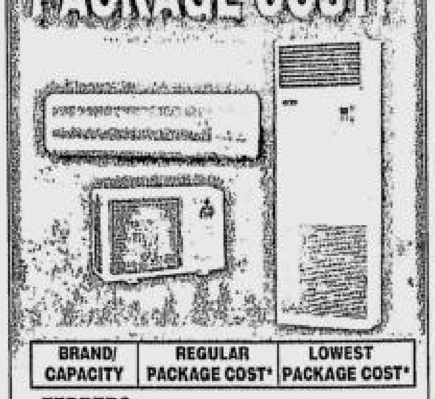

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1. Phase 1 (Shell side) of the green safety buffer zone is cleared and ready for earthworks and greening.
2. Construction has began on the access road and buffer zone on the Petron side.
3. In coordination with urban planner Palafox Associates, a development plan is being finalized for the immediate opening and public use of major portions of the envisioned Pandacan Linear Park.

c. The integration of operations of the Pandacan terminals

A basic agreement is now in place for the establishment of joint venture company to integrate the operations of the three Pandacan terminals. A detailed engineering plan has likewise been completed by CSPL Philippines, Inc., the local affiliate of Chiyoda Singapore (PTE) Limited. With this agreement and engineering plan, the phase down process can now advance at a much faster pace.

We appeal for understanding

Our sincere and serious efforts to fully comply with all the commitments embodied in the MoU are subject to constraints for which we are appealing for understanding:

1. The scaling down of operations has to be undertaken without interrupting the flow of petroleum products to Manila and a large part of Luzon. Should the removal of tanks have proceeded in a shorter time, supply shortages of petroleum products would have been experienced.

2. Operating the terminal as a common facility required the prior resolution of complex issues, among them ownership and operatorship.

3. There are strict technical and operating procedures in accordance with international standards that have to be done in the decommissioning and dismantling of tanks.

4. The integration of our operations requires time as engineering designs and commercial arrangements are finalized. The reduction in the number of oil storage tanks, for instance, requires the design and installation of new pipelines and pump systems that will have to be custom-built and imported.

We share with you a common concern

1. While an independent international risk consultancy firm has confirmed the high level of safety and security at the Pandacan terminals, we are committed to enhance this further with the development and maintenance of safety and green buffer zones.

2. The plans being finalized in coordination with Palafox Associates is in support of the development of the City of Manila as per your "Buhayin ang Maynila" program.

We recognize the initiative and effort of the City Mayor and the City Council to strike a balance between the safety and security concerns of Pandacan residents and the stable and uninterrupted supply of petroleum products for the country.

We therefore reiterate our commitment to ensure that this model of cooperation between the local government and private sector is successfully achieved.

CALTEX PETRON

Abu leader changes mind, vows to attack Americans

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—An Abu Sayyaf leader who was earlier appreciative of the United States troop presence in the south has turned around and is now threatening a new group of US soldiers scheduled to begin the second phase of counter-terrorism exercises in Mindanao next month.

"We changed our mind. We will fight the Americans," said the Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf leader Jose Ramirez, alias Hamsiraji Sali, who claimed to have made more than a million pesos in the process of being coaxed into surrendering by emissaries sent by government and police officials.

He threatened to abduct more foreigners if any US soldier so much as stepped on Basilan soil.

Sali said his group was capable of "dispatching" suicide bombers to target US soldiers in Zamboanga.

Sali is one of the Abu Sayyaf leaders wanted by the US government for the kidnap and murder of US missionary Martin Burnham. He carries a $5-million price on his head from the US government and another P5 million from the Philippine government for information leading to his capture.

Last year, Sali had praised the development projects carried out by an earlier contingent of US Special Forces that trained Filipino troops fighting the Abu Sayyaf kidnap group, which the US said was linked to the international terrorist network of Osama bin Laden.

Sali said the Americans were better than the Basilan local politicians because they gave the people medicines and provided safe drinking water, and constructed roads and bridges.

While he was praising the US troops, Sali was deep in negotiations with government representatives for his ostensible surrender.

The negotiations failed and Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya was to say later that Sali had "put one over the negotiators."

Sali said he made more than P1 million from the negotiations. He said the chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Eduardo Matillano gave him P400,000 while another military officer gave him P500,000. A number of unnamed local and national politicians gave him a total of P500,000, he said. He also collected rice, fish and canned food.

"I'm using the money given by these military and police officials and politicians to buy more firearms," Sali said, adding that it will also mean more recruits for his group.

As to why he changed his mind about the Americans, Sali said he got a scolding from other Abu Sayyaf leaders for praising the presence of US troops in Basilan.

Task Force Zamboanga commander Col. Alexander Yapching, who is playing host to the US troops, did not discount the seriousness of Sali's threat.

He admitted that the Abu Sayyaf remains the strongest threat to the safety of the US troops participating in the Bayanihan training exercises.

A seven-man US advance party arrived here a few days ago. The rest of the troops will not be arriving until mid-February.

Yapching said the number of Filipino soldiers assigned to secure the Americans has been increased.

"We don't want to be caught flat-footed this time," he said.

In October 2002, one US soldier was killed and another wounded in a bomb explosion inside a videoke bar near the Army camp in Barangay Malagutay where the US troops were based.

The Abu Sayyaf was blamed for the blast.

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Reds torch another Globe cell site but damage minimal

By Martin P. Marfil

COMMUNIST guerrillas attacked another Globe cell site the other night, burning down equipment but failing to halt operations.

The site was located in Barangay Dapdap East, near the boundary of Tagaytay City and Calamba, Laguna.

Reports reaching Camp Crame said that six suspected NPA guerrillas, including two women, arrived at the site at around 7:30 p.m. and disarmed the lone security guard Roel Opeña.

They poured gasoline over the radio transmission equipment, set it on fire, and fled, taking with them Opeña's service pistol and a handheld radio.

Cavite police chief Senior Supt. Roberto Rosales said the fire damaged the transmission equipment and two air-conditioning units, but was easily put out. The site was shut down only briefly.

Rosales suspected that the rebels panicked because they left without emptying their fuel container, which the responding team recovered "with still lots of gas."

The rebels have attacked Globe sites 12 times since November 2001 because of the company's refusal to pay "revolutionary taxes."

Last year, the military said the NPA destroyed about P500 million worth of telecommunications facilities.

In an earlier interview, Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson, reminded business establishments to pay up, "to avoid inconveniences."

Calabarzon police chief Supt. Enrique Galang Jr. directed Task Group Vital Installation to intensify its efforts in the region to thwart future attacks. *With Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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Baby boom seen before . . .

From page A1

With just a week left of the Year of the Horse before it is succeeded by the Goat in the 12-animal Chinese horoscope, hospitals are reporting record birth rates and even a surge in demand for cesarean sections.

Officials at Beijing's biggest hospital specializing in childbirth said a marked rise in births last year was due to the traditional belief that the sign of the horse is luckier than the sign of the goat.

More than 5,000 babies were born last year at the Beijing Gynecology and Obstetrics Hospital compared to around 4,000 in 2001.

"The main reason is because people want to give birth in the Year of the Horse," said Zhai Guirong, director of the gynecology and obstetrics department. "Every hospital in Beijing is seeing this trend."

Maternity wards throughout the country have been packed with women waiting to give birth before Jan. 31, the last day of the Year of the Horse, according to the state-run Xinhua news agency.

For weeks, the maternity ward at the Shanxi Provincial People's Hospital in northern China has been so full that expectant mothers have had to make a reservation for a bed days before their baby is due.

Many Chinese people believe that babies born in the Year of the Goat, especially females, are doomed to endure a hard life.

The belief stems from the fact that if a goat is born in winter—the time when Chinese New Year falls—it will not have much grass to eat as the fields are dry.

Horse means success

The horse, on the other hand, is equated with success.

Some parents whose baby is due just after Lunar New Year's day, which falls on Feb. 1 this year, are requesting cesarean sections to ensure their child is born in the Year of the Horse.

"If it's a difference of two weeks, we try to accommodate the parents, but if it's more than two weeks, we won't perform the surgeries," Zhai said. "It's not good for the baby or the mother."

Guo Wenjia's wife had a baby by natural birth last week, beating the Year of the Goat by just a few days.

But if she had not, the couple would have opted for a cesarean, Guo said.

"I don't believe people born in the goat year are ill-fated. I just don't want my son to grow up with the feeling he was born in a bad year and use that as an excuse not to excel," Guo said. "I'm worried this could affect his self-esteem and performance in school."

Expectant father Ivan Wang, whose wife was in labor last week, said he would have done the same.

"I guarantee you, nine out of 10 of my friends would ask me, 'When was your baby born? Is he of the goat or horse year? Why didn't you have him born in the horse year instead?'" Wang said. "It would be too much trouble to explain."

Ironically, there is no basis for the prejudice against goats in Chinese culture as goats are generally associated with pleasant traits. The Chinese character for goat is used to form other characters representing "beauty," "luck," and "kindness."

Non-believers

Many parents expecting babies in the new lunar year, however, say they cannot be bothered with such "nonsense."

"I don't care at all about that. I want to have a little goatling," said Jessi Zhong, whose baby is due on Feb. 7. "My parents were both born in the goat year and there's nothing wrong with their lives."

Her husband Erick Yuan agreed.

"I think it's better to be born in the Year of the Goat. With fewer babies born in this year, there will be less competition for school places and jobs," he said. "Even waiting for a doctor's appointment would not take as long."

The Chinese birth sign system is a 12-year rotation that starts with rat, followed by ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and ends with pig.

Mother-to-be Yang Liping, 31, expressed confusion.

"If this coming year is not good, then I don't know when I'm supposed to have a baby," Yang said.

Next year is the Year of the Monkey, and people say their personality is unstable. Then the following year is the rooster, and that's no good because they are always looking for food.

"It should be left to nature," Yang said. *AFP*

MEDICard ADVISORY

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Moment of truth

EDITORIAL

TODAY, Election Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco faces the moment of truth: will she be impeached or not? Today also, the House of Representatives' credibility as an institution will be tested: will it act on the basis of the evidence or will most of its members shirk their responsibility, fearing that Tancangco can create trouble for them come election time?

The Tancangco impeachment complaint had to go to the entire chamber because the House committee on justice voted to dismiss it. They found the complaint to be "insufficient in substance" despite the fact that the charges were solidly supported by 250 pages of annexes containing official records of the Commission on Audit, the Commission on Elections and the Supreme Court indicating graft and corruption, betrayal of the public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution.

Those who will read the 365-page impeachment complaint (including the annexes) will be shocked, not just by the gravity of the charges, but by the way Tancangco committed the alleged offenses with impunity.

The impeachment complaint charges Tancangco with:

1. Graft and corruption. The complainants say that because of her gross inexcusable negligence the Comelec was unable to do an automated counting of the votes in the May 2001 elections, thus failing to comply with the law (RA 8436) and incurring expenses not authorized by law.

2. Betrayal of the public trust. She authorized the release of P199 million in advances to persons who were not permanent employees of the Comelec and who were not bonded, allegedly for the purpose of implementing the National Precinct Mapping Project. As of Aug. 15, 2001 the advances remained unliquidated.

She also failed or refused to attend 44 en banc sessions of the Comelec without justifiable reason during the period January to December 2001. And she refused, without justifiable reason, to act on the appointments of at least 156 election officers, regional election directors and provincial election supervisors to vacant posts.

3. Culpable violation of the Constitution, specifically Section 8, Article XII which provides that no elective or appointive public officer or employee shall receive additional, double or indirect compensation unless specifically authorized by law. The complainants said she engaged government employees as consultants without the approval of the commission and gave them additional compensation.

Lawyer Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate and general counsel of the INQUIRER, has said that the charge sheet reads "like a checklist of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Law on the things a public official should not do." He added that the amounts involved "are not chicken feed; they are in billions of pesos."

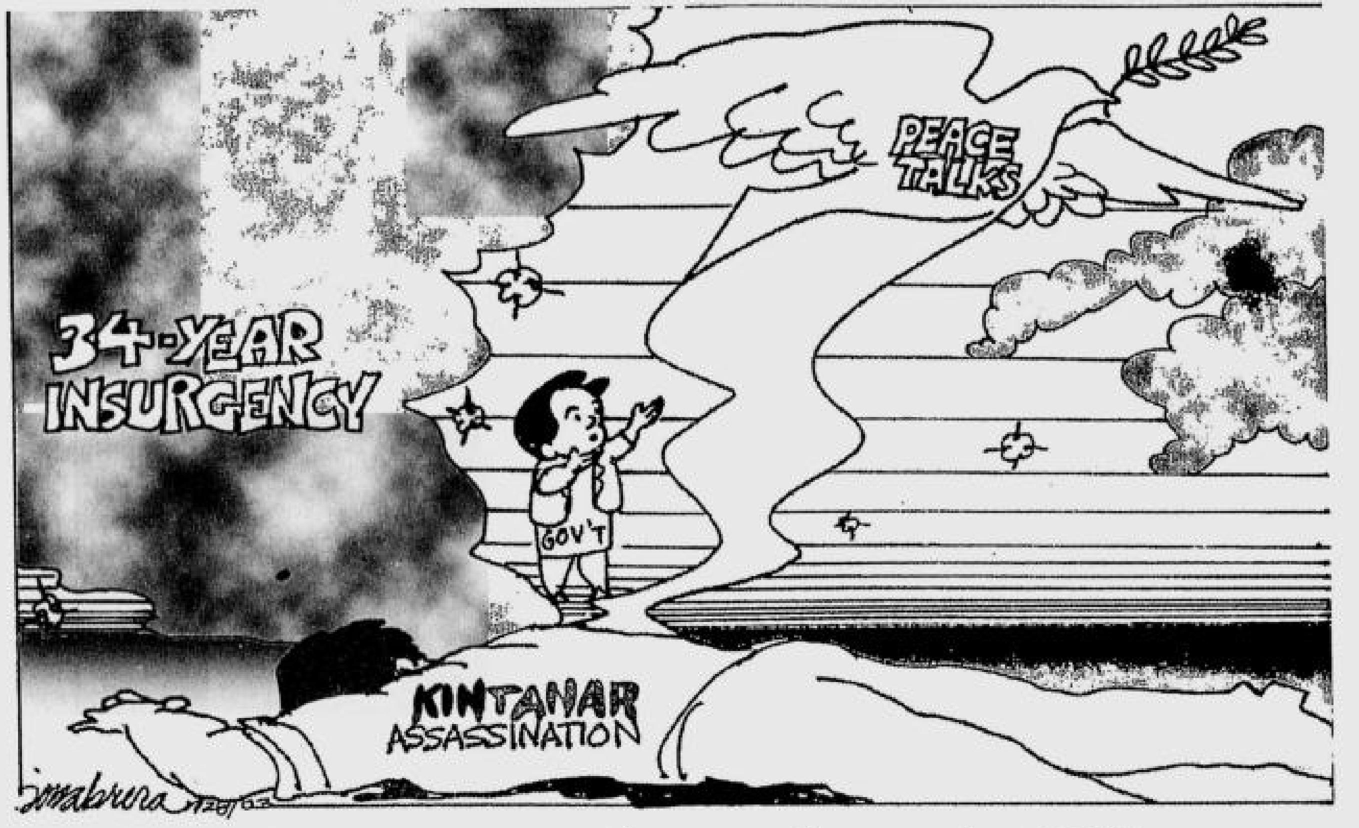
Tancangco awarded the VRIS project at a cost of P6.5 billion to Photokina although the Comelec had an authorized budget of only P1.2 billion. In contrast, she quickly declared a failure of bidding for the automated counting because the budget was only P500 million while the clustered bids were at P750 million. She allowed the expenditure of up to P500 million for the precinct mapping project even if the "wasteful expenses" were not authorized by law.

Because Tancangco failed or refused to attend 44 en banc sessions of the Comelec without reason, there were 28 sessions where there was no quorum and the commission could not transact any business. If any other civil service official had committed a similar offense, he or she would have been fired immediately for gross neglect of duty under the Administrative Code.

Space does not permit a longer discussion of the other charges against Tancangco. But the charge that should make the members of the House seriously consider giving due course to the complaint is the "over-expenditure" for the VRIS. A recent Supreme Court ruling declared the VRIS contract void ab initio. Together with the COA findings, it shows that something irregular and illegal happened.

The VRIS issue has been called "a palpable assault on the constitutional power of Congress over the purse strings," because while only P1.2 billion was appropriated, Tancangco approved the expenditure of P6.5 billion for the project. Her act of increasing the VRIS outlay all by herself is her greatest offense against Congress.

Her actions and decisions, all documented in the complaint, tend to show that she is unfit to remain as an election commissioner. The very least the House can do is to endorse the impeachment complaint to the Senate.



All you want to know about the VAT

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

HERE'S good news for journalists: They are not included among the professionals who have to pay a 10-percent value-added tax (VAT) on their income. This is according to Ruperto P. Somera, regional director of the Bureau of Internal Revenue for Manila, who was sent by Commissioner Guillermo Parayno to represent him in yesterday's Kapihan sa Manila.

Journalists, Somera said, who are not fixed income earners like columnists and correspondents, are not included among the "professionals" who must pay the VAT. Professionals, he explained, are those who have to pass government examinations and are issued licenses by the Professional Regulation Commission like doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, etc. Show-biz workers and professional athletes don't take examinations or get licenses but they are also included because the law specifically names them. Journalists, however, are not on that list. Broadcasters paid on talent basis, on the other hand, are on the list.

This should clarify the confusion over the status of columnists, consultants and correspondents in media.

Those who are on the list but don't earn more than P550,000 a year don't have to pay the 10-percent VAT. They pay only 3 percent.

This P550,000 cutoff was set way back 1996 and inflation has already made it obsolete. So it must be adjusted upward, meaning it should be increased. The BIR cannot do that, however, Somera said, Congress should adjust it.

But the BIR should recommend it, I said.

Yes, he would recommend to the commissioner that the BIR recommend it to Congress, Somera agreed.

The VAT paid by the professionals, Somera continued, can be deducted from the income tax. And the tools of the trade of the professional—such as the rent for the doctor's clinic, equipment, stethoscope, rubber gloves, thermometers, etc. can be deducted from the VAT.

The VAT paid by the doctors, Somera said, is passed on to their patients; the lawyers, accountants, engineers and architects to their clients; the show-biz folk to their producers; and the athletes to their team sponsors.

A doctor doesn't have to pay any VAT for them, Somera replied. In the first place, he doesn't issue any receipt for them.

Speaking of receipts, Somera said that vigilant citizens can earn money and help the government, by ratting on establishments that don't issue receipts. Many gasoline stations and hardware stores don't issue receipts. Somera said that if you know any store doing this, report them to the BIR. You will be asked to sign an affidavit but your identity will remain confidential so you need not be afraid. The offending store will be investigated and prosecuted. The informer will get 10 percent of whatever amount is collected from the tax evader.

In the middle of the forum, new Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan joined the discussion. He and Somera revealed that subsistence farmers don't pay any income tax, much less any VAT. What they earn is not even enough to make both ends meet.

But they both agreed that the present tax system is full of holes through which taxes leak like a sieve. Movie superstars, who earn millions for each movie, get so many deductions that they pay only a pittance in income tax. Dolphy, for instance, who is the top income taxpayer in show biz last year, paid only P2.5 million in income tax. But he collects an average of P5 million fee per picture.

An employee who earns only P170,000 a year, already pays a 20 percent income tax, Somera said. But show-biz stars who earn millions also pay 20 percent.

In any case, no movie or basketball superstar or any big-time businessman pays more than 32 percent on their net income because of the cap put there by Congress. As in the United States, the maximum used to be 75 percent, but Congress lowered it to 32 percent because of the lobby by rich businessmen who, instead of paying their fair share of taxes, put the money that should have gone to the government to the campaign funds of politicians. They were repaid with the very much depressed maximum rate for the income tax.

Bankers and banks are indeed exempted from the VAT, Somera continued. Bankers are salaried individuals and banks pay the corporate income tax.

Both Somera and Pagdanganan agreed that the 32 percent cap should be removed. But again, Congress should be the one to do this because the BIR alone has no authority to do it, Somera said.

But will the BIR recommend it to Congress?

Yes, it will, he answered.

Pagdanganan and Somera also agreed with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that we should shift to gross taxation to plug all the loopholes in our tax system. Also, because it removes discretion on the part of BIR personnel which deductions to allow or not, the system would lessen graft and corruption.

Pagdanganan said, however, that the gross taxation should be graduated depending on their income.

Somera, on the other hand, said that different industries should have different rates, as their needs and situations differ. A uniform gross tax will not be fair.

A gross tax on individual incomes, however, would be beneficial both to the taxpayer and the BIR. Tax computations would be simple.

Fences

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

IN THE Anne Frank exhibit at San Agustin Museum, there's a Nazi poster encouraging Germans to extol the family above all others. Its definition of family is a couple of Aryans and their children. The man is not just the ideal husband, the one who puts food on the table, he is the ideal citizen, one who is ready to lay his life down for the state, which is the guarantor of the family, without which the family would not exist. The woman is not just the ideal wife, the one who keeps the home and raises healthy children, she is the ideal citizen, who supports her husband's willingness to lay his life down for the state, without which they would not be a family.

The kids are not just God's gifts, blond and blue-eyed wonders, they are ideal future citizens who take on the roles their fathers and mothers have set out for them. The boys learn early on to adopt martial roles, the more ideal ones joining the Hitler Youth and developing character by stoning the glass windows of Jewish shops, or better still their owners themselves. The girls stay healthy as a matter of duty and learn good breeding, in infinitely more ways than one.

I am not saying that the Catholic Church's recent world meeting of families is the same as this. Though from where I stand, I hear not very faint echoes of it. Probably more accurately, it is not unlike the famous, or infamous, Procrustes' bed, the one invented by the innkeeper by that name to divest travelers of their life and property. Procrustes had guests sleep on a bed that was meant only for a perfect fit. If the guests were too short, he stretched their arms and legs with a rack. If they were too tall, he lopped off their feet or head. The result of course being that they died and left their belongings to the perverted Samaritan.

You look at the world meeting of families and you have to ask yourself: What are they trying to keep out and what are they trying to keep in?

My impression is that if they are not designing a perfect fit for families, or Family (capital "F" and singular), they are prescribing something close to it. The things that are being lopped off here are veritable arms and legs. At the very least, there is Teodoro Bacani's threat to oppose GMA's apparently aggressive family planning program. I am no big fan of GMA or family planning per se (I've always said that family planning must go hand in hand with wealth distribution, otherwise we're just reinforcing a status quo where a fifth of the population gets four-fifths of the nation's wealth by removing one of the threats to it, which is runaway population growth), but you've got to be a fool not to realize the time bomb that runaway population growth also is. China, which has been resolute in distributing wealth (however you debate the how), also has a resolute, no, draconian, one-child policy.

More patently, there is the exclusion in this concept of the Family the union of gays, separated couples, and priests, current or ex. I leave the gays, who are one of the most formidably gifted groups in society (I remember somebody saying that without them, the entire movie industry would grind to a halt) to defend themselves. Divorce I've always plugged for: I cannot imagine a bigger threat to the family than a couple locked in bitter enmity, which in this country is fraught with the danger of physical abuse. As for priests, I do not know why they can't marry and have kids, which is often an answered prayer—the kind that turns out to be worse than the unanswered one. But it should be a matter of choice, like most things in life.

You keep all these out and you have to ask yourself what you are trying to keep in. What remains is so utterly joyless, the kind of relentless standardization, or normalization, or uniformity Michel Foucault would have found classic. Who would be left to inherit this Christian earth?

Indeed, what on earth, or heaven, happened to love in all this? I've always thought the only universal thing in the concept of families was love. People come together and keep together not out of necessity or duty or obligation but out of love. That is not to say that they should not exercise any responsibility—not breeding like rabbits is precisely an expression of it—it is merely to say they should not be bound solely by it.

That is what makes the concept of Family of the World meeting of families joyless. You come right down to it, they are just prescribing traditional roles for men and women and their offspring, with the added obligation of them owing absolute fealty to an institution that is presumed to be the protector of life and its regeneration. In this case, the Church in lieu of the State. I did say it had not very faint echoes of an inquisitorial past.

What this religious concept of the family has come down to is not unlike what religion itself has come down to. I've always thought that people believed in God because of their awe and wonder at the miracle of creation and their need to show gratefulness to its Source, whoever He may be. And the feminists may not be wrong when they say He is a She. Why ever not? I've always believed people believed in their Church because it refracted divinity in all its benevolence and generosity. To find faith reduced to nothing more than a bundle of rules and duties and obligations, enforced with the coercive power of denying you a place in heaven or earth, it's enough to make you want to belong to the excluded rather than the included.

Robert Frost has an interesting poem about fences. The thing about putting them up, he says, is that you never really know what you are fencing out and what you are fencing in. It's a thought worth pondering in these days of miracle and murder.

House vote on Tancangco crucial

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

TODAY the eyes of Filipinos will be on the House of Representatives as it decides whether it will finally hear in plenary session the justice committee report of Dec. 12, 2002, seeking to dismiss the impeachment complaint of many citizens' organizations against Election Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco. The complaint includes alleged graft and corruption, gross inexcusable negligence, betrayal of public trust and violation of the Constitution, not to mention preemption of the House's power over the purse. What the House will do will have far-reaching implications not only on good governance and the government's campaign against corruption. But just as significant, it could have a direct impact on the snowballing House campaign to win support from the people for its move to amend the Constitution through a constituent assembly.

* * *

Winning support for Charter change requires the House to undertake plenty of confidence-building measures among the citizens. In this regard, the chamber has been making progress. One can see the resistance to Charter change slowly weakening and a constituent assembly is gaining adherents doubtless because a constitutional convention is expensive, tedious and brings no guarantee that it will do a better job. But the way the justice committee has handled the impeachment complaint may demolish overnight the collective efforts toward confidence-building. The question that would doubtless linger in the citizens' mind is, if the House can botch up this well-documented case, can we entrust to them the task of amending the Constitution?

This is due to the perception among the citizens that the justice committee did not give due course to the 280-page complaint against Tancangco which was fully documented by the Commission on Audit. The COA ruling on Tancangco's group's unliquidated advances amounting to millions of pesos was upheld unanimously by the Supreme Court in its September 2002 decision, finding the Comelec contract with Photokina on the system of voter registration devised by Tancangco and costing an initial P1.2 billion void ab initio.

* * *

Buoyed up by the SC decision, many citizens' organizations got together and supported the complaint against Tancangco courageously filed by Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella and others. But the justice committee, by a vote of 36 to 16, decided to throw the case out due to "insufficiency in substance." What rankled most was that no attempt was made whatsoever by those opposed to Tancangco's impeachment to explain their finding. They only cited their "political discretion" and said they didn't have to give any reason for their vote. That sounded quite arrogant.

On the other hand, there were those who chose to play blind. Makati Rep. Agapito Aquino dismissed the heavy documentation as "mere conjectures based on suspicions and not on actual facts or pieces of evidence that will engender a well-founded belief that wrongdoing has been committed by the respondent." The problem is that the committee report oftentimes influences the plenary vote, unless the lawmakers are subjected to shock treatment by the citizenry.

In contrast to Butz's shockingly *malabo* stance, his nephew Tarlac Rep. Noynoy Aquino is clearly on the "right side of history." He is part of the small group pressing for Tancangco's investigation, along with Represenatives Magtanggol Gunigundo, Arthur Defensor, Eduardo Nachura, Douglas Cagas, Oscar Rodriguez, Clavel Martinez, Belma Cabilao, Laurence Wacnang, Raul Gonzales and Butch Abad.

* * *

I asked some House members why many of their colleagues seem to be afraid of Tancangco although she will retire in February next year, three months before the May elections. It appears that they are worried not so much about what the feisty commissioner would do in 2004 but what she would do with some pending cases in the next weeks and months.

It seems that Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos has taken to heart the President's counsel to avoid the gridlock that hounded his predecessor Alfredo Benipayo and that he and Comelec Commissioner Rufino Javier have been zealously placating Tancangco. I understand that word is being passed quietly by some Comelec personnel that there would be rewards for promoting peace and quiet in the poll body. For instance, there are about 80 mayors and vice mayors in 46 congressional districts who have cases pending before the Comelec. There are reports that congressmen are being encouraged to go easy on Tancangco if they want their local allies to win. For example, a high-profile Central Luzon congressman is said to have five mayor-allies with pending cases. No wonder he is against investigating Tancangco.

* * *

These are political realities, but political parties also come into play although Speaker Jose de Venecia insists that the vote on issues like Tancangco and former Ombudsman Aniano Desierto before her are "individual conscience votes." JDV says in this issue his job is purely ministerial and decisions are made by the committee and the individual lawmakers voting in plenary session on the committee report. Maybe that is the case with Lakas, but the overwhelming support for Tancangco among NPC and members in the House seems to stem from the fact that she is still regarded as an Erap girl. Tancangco was in the stable of Erap's brother-in-law Raul de Guzman and was in fact recommended by him to the Comelec post.

One congressman also pointed out that the pro-investigation group should improve their strategy. Some of them said to be "*tamad magbasa*" with some of them disappearing after signing the anti-Tancangco resolution. The opposition, on the other hand, has a good strategy and plan their moves well.

Old stories and imperialist impositions

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

HEALTH Secretary Manuel Dayrit may have been speaking "in jest" when he shared with reporters the anecdotes about how contraceptive pills are used by health workers to help propagate orchids, and how free condoms were serving to brighten up children's parties.

"Those stories date back to the '70s," shares Tom Osias, executive director of the Population Commission, while Health Undersecretary Mila Fernandez says the anecdotes about the misuse of contraceptive supplies led to a massive investigation that resulted in more stringent monitoring of contraceptive distribution and use. So if those stories are "old hat," why did Dayrit dig them up, especially to drive home the point that there is in fact an "oversupply" of contraceptives in the country?

As it is, Dayrit's remarks have had ramifications beyond our borders. The local office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), for instance, received concerned inquiries from offices abroad that it had tapped to make up for the expected shortfall of contraceptive supplies once the US Agency for International Development starts shutting off funding for contraceptives. Even the Usaid Manila office has reportedly received queries from Washington about the alleged misuse of its contraceptive donations. So what was Dayrit thinking of?

* * *

SURELY, Dayrit knows how dicey the situation is. Just last month, he headed the Philippine delegation to the Asia-Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok where they confronted what Bukidnon Rep. Neric Acosta calls "the bizarre turn of events in the international arena."

In Bangkok, said Dr. Mercedes Concepcion, who describes herself as a "relic," having taken part in population conferences since the first one in 1963, the United States "made a 180-degree turn from its position in both the 1994 Cairo Conference and the 1998 "Cairo Plus Five" meet, where the United States led the international consensus on the need to promote the full range of reproductive health needs of both men and women.

Instead, as Laura McClure writes in the on-line magazine "Slate.com," when US Assistant Secretary of State Arthur E. Dewey delivered his remarks on abortion in Bangkok, Asian delegates were "stunned" when they heard him "state unequivocally that the United States would seek to block the passage of any international family planning policy that permits abortion or promotes contraception for adolescents."

The other delegations would soon learn firsthand about withstanding what Acosta called "imperial pressures." Sitting on the drafting committee of the conference, Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales was witness to the "bullying tactics" of the Americans, who, she said, "stormed our group and challenged us to declare our personal stand on abortion, threatening that 'your votes would be reported to your own governments, will you be comfortable with that?'" As McClure explains it, "US delegates maintained that phrases present in the conference's proposed policy—such as 'reproductive rights' and 'consistent condom use'—were euphemisms for abortion and the approval of 'underage' sex—policies far out of line with the current Bush administration, which advocates abstinence outside of marriage and opposes abortion.

"But when the US demanded that even the phrase 'reproductive health' be struck from the proposal in order to protect unborn children, critics—even those from highly religious countries like the Philippines and Iran—suggested that US foreign policy had been hijacked by the religious right."

In the end, the bamboozling by the Americans resulted in their isolation. As McClure reports: "US delegates argued bitterly against **the inclusion of such phrases in the proposal until the last day of the conference, when, faced with an impasse, the conference took a vote—an unusual tactic for UN conferences. The United States lost the first vote—to exclude language on 'reproductive rights'—31-1. They lost the second—over 'adolescent reproductive health'"—32-1.**

* * *

THOUGH most of those present at the Bangkok conference were all praises for what Fernandez termed "our common stand (of the official delegation and the participating NGOs) reaffirming the Cairo and Bali conferences," Mercy Fabros of Womenhealth maintains that "the US succeeded in hijacking the APPC."

Women's NGOs, she said, had hoped to expand the discourse at the conference to include other issues such as neo-liberalism, fundamentalism and militarism. But with even such a "motherhood" term as reproductive health under attack, delegations and NGOs had to link arms to prevent any erosion of the gains made in the last decade.

Reena Marcelo, of the Reproductive Rights Research Group, extolled how "the Philippine team upheld our sovereignty" in Bangkok, but she sees as a further challenge the "mirroring" of the exemplary cooperation and teamwork between government and NGOs in Bangkok in the local situation, "from barangay level and up."

* * *

"FRANKLY, we were all very scared," admitted UNFPA director Dr. Zahidul Huque. Given how the United States seems to always have its way with the Philippine government, they were afraid the US delegation would be able to influence the Philippine delegation. "And many countries were depending on the Philippines to stand by its position."

But contrary to their fears, he said, the Philippines emerged as "one of the most active delegations" in both the prepcom and the conference proper, and turned out to be a "major force among like-minded countries."

If only our health secretary would stop making jokes about the population program.

What about China?

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

WAY back in the 1590s, the Spanish governor-general of the Philippines was worried that Chinese silk was sweeping the local markets and threatening the weaving industry. He decided to come up with an edict restricting the wearing of silk. Needless to say, he failed.

About two years ago, I was struck by the information that 60 percent of all goods sold in American department stores were manufactured in China. Nordstrom had lined, linen pants selling for $20 that I thought were a steal, woven boxes with brass hardware at the Bombay Company that I first thought came from the Philippines since the weave resembled that of the mountain province. No such luck: the tag said "Made in China." The home furnishings store also had beautiful, fat, silk tassels in Versace colors selling for less than $10.

This year, I was surprised to find art books and stationery at the Metropolitan Museum in New York printed in China. Even here at home, practically all the silver-plated merchandise at Rustan's are from China.

According to articles that have appeared in Time, Newsweek, Fortune Magazine and I'm sure a couple of other publications, the rest of Asia has awakened to the threat. Trying a different tack, Singapore is producing genetically engineered mice for the biotech industry. Yeo, the co-chairman of the government's Economic Development Board persuaded Alan Colman, the Scotsman who cloned Dolly the sheep, to relocate to Singapore. He is also wooing others with the promise of a legal code free of American-style restrictions against embryonic stem cell research.

I bring this up because I wonder what our policy or strategy is with regard to China aside from trying to export more bananas to them.

Aware that China is perfectly capable of eating into their share of the market, the island planners of Singapore are trying to move away from electronics, chemicals and other labor intensive activities that are vulnerable to Chinese competition.

No Asian country can compete with China's cheap labor (the minimum wage is $30 a month in some areas although it can go as high as $100 in the export zones). Foreign investment in China attracted $52.7 billion in 2002 (more than the rest of Asia combined) and low-priced exports are providing the world with cheap goods.

A Malaysian labor economist sees Malaysia as nothing more than a Chinese enclave in the future, which reminds me of the state of affairs in the 16th century when Chinese sampans crowded with Chinese products sailed the Asian seas and their goods flooded the markets of Southeast Asia. If China didn't physically take over its neighbors, it was probably because it saw no need for it.

In defense, Taiwan is moving its high-tech industry to the mainland where cheaper labor will enable it to remain competitive. Despite the contretemps with the mainland, 400,000 Taiwanese have taken up residence in Shanghai alone.

And it isn't only Taiwan. Japan's Sanyo intends to shift its entire production of air-conditioners to China and invested $30 million to put up a refrigerator factory in Qingdao. Nissan, Toyota and Honda are all striking deals with Chinese car manufacturers. By 2010 Nissan intends to produce 900,000 cars and trucks. Japan alone invested $3 billion in China last year.

Filipino economic planners should look at those figures and either weep or resign. Maybe both.

Those who remain in Taiwan are importing workers from the Philippines, which to judge from the speech of Jaime Zobel may be the only strategy left to us (sigh—*ang babaw ng kaligayahan, no?*)

Now that quotas on visitors to China have been scrapped, tourism has taken off. Hong Kong is fighting the competition by opening a Disney theme park. South Korea and Thailand are advertising for Chinese and local tourists, but Shen-Shen on Hong Kong's border is putting up its own amusement parks as well. Certainly the mystique of Shanghai is being sold, aided by improved infrastructure and an impressive museum by any standard. (Let's just say the Chinese aim for excellence at least in that area.)

In the last five years, China has clocked growth rates of 7 to 8 percent. Its exports in 2002 were worth $322 billion, and it is now the largest exporter of goods to the United States. China is already the world's dominant manufacturer of textiles, shoes and toys and is gaining on computer components, telecommunication devices and other electronic goods. It is going into semi-conductors, machine tools, petrochemicals and cars.

Ten years ago, a town called Dongguan, about an hour's drive up the Pearl River from Hong Kong, was nothing more than rice paddies and vegetable fields. Today it has newly paved highways and is home to 20,000 factories with 5.5 migrant workers who earn an average of $100 a month. Dogguan's economy grew 22 percent last year. The mayor states that the objective is not to provide cheap labor but "to have our own core technologies, our own brands, our own place in the world market." (Shall we ever have officials who think in those terms rather than getting themselves reelected?)

In the meantime back at the ranch, our politicians are renaming streets (it appears those were the majority of the bills passed last year and if the people don't care about changing the Constitution, they could care even less about streets), trying unsuccessfully to stage coups on each other, conducting useless investigations that lead nowhere and traveling to their heart's content.

Andy's story

YOUNG BLOOD

Elaine

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

ONE Saturday morning in July last year, I received a crucial call regarding a young life. At the other end of the line was Andy's dad. He was telling me Andy had been brought home by someone who found him running barefoot and almost totally naked on the highway. He was a bit bruised and out of control.

I immediately went over their house and saw Andy. His eyes were cold and dull. He looked weak and exhausted. He barely looked into my eyes while I spoke to him.

I came to know Andy the year before. He attended my Chemistry classes but he usually couldn't focus on the lessons. He seemed disinterested and would often stare blankly at the board. But he was not the kind who misbehaved and became restless. He rarely talked. His mind seemed to be somewhere else.

Late in October that year, his mom decided to make him take tutorials under me, perhaps because I was the only teacher who was willing to accept him. The first night he stepped into our boarding house for his tutorial class, together with two other teens, I sensed big trouble.

Andy had history of smoking, drinking and drug use. The second student I was tutoring was Andy's close friend, a tomboy who had grown up in the United States, and the third was a big guy who was as disinterested in his studies as Andy.

I helped them at some personal risk. Aside from doing the tutorial at night, I also had to monitor their behavior and their escapades. I had to become some kind of an agent or a spy. Whether they smoked pot or cigarettes, drank beer or gin, or went around with the other guys, I had to know because I felt that I could not afford to fail.

Andy always came for the tutorial every day after school. I was amazed to see him construct and name organic compounds or even balance equations. Though he did not do these perfectly, he understood his lessons. He could be a bit careless, but he was quite diligent in solving problems and doing the very long exercises I gave. And he seemed to be happy about the progress he was making.

Once when I asked why he had a stutter, he told me, "*Epekto sa drugs, Ma'am.*" I found it quite worrisome that he said it as if it was the most natural thing in the world.

I often explained to him that to me the tutorials were serious business. And it was not because of the extra income they brought me, but because it was a matter of professional pride. I went about my tasks seriously although there were times when I felt tired and bored. I wanted the three of them to value education and life.

I knew I could not cure Andy of his stutter or his addiction. But I thought I could help him help himself.

There were times when I felt like giving up. But still I gave Andy the assurance that even if everyone else believed that he was totally rotten, he could still find goodness in himself and that there would always be a part of him that said he had to change himself and mend his ways. I knew this was more than what my task called for, but I wanted him to know because I could still see some hope in him.

That summer, he sent me a text message saying he was off for a vacation somewhere in Surigao with his cousins. He had in fact started his vacation a few weeks too early.

In his next text message, he told me that he wanted to stop going to school for reasons he never really explained. He just said he was tired. I felt he was hopeless, but still I tried to encourage him to continue.

Perhaps I succeeded because he enrolled that school year. But I could see right off that he was the same 15-year-old who had attended my Chemistry class. He had not changed. He was still cutting classes frequently, usually on days when there was Physical Education.

But he improved a lot in his dance sessions. He had a knack for modern dance although the school's dance troupe performed mostly cultural and interpretative dances.

That year I was assigned to the elementary department. I did not see him often in the corridors. But occasionally I would catch a glimpse of him at the school canteen or in the school bus.

Then came that Saturday when his dad gave me a call. When I talked to Andy, he told me he could remember how much he wanted to run and get killed by a bus, but ironically he wanted to live at the same time. He said he was praying that his life would be spared even while he was running. He couldn't believe how shamefully he had behaved. "*Dili ko gusto mabuang, Ma'am! Hadlok kaayo* (I don't want to go crazy, Ma'am. It's so scary)," he remorsefully told me.

I wanted to scold him the same way I did in my classes. I wanted to tell him how stupid he was. He was wasting his life.

But I saw shame, guilt and intense fear in his eyes. The same eyes which had stared blankly at my chalkboard.

"It was like I was dreaming," he continued. "I thought I got hit by a bus. But I could tell that I was still alive. I will tell the truth. I don't care anymore if I will be expelled from school. But at least I will do something good in my life. I will never use drugs again."

Again I felt like letting him have it. But the fear that filled his eyes stopped me. I could not say anything.

I know that Andy's story is a fairly common one. It is not the first time something like this happened, and neither is he the only one caught in this fix. Thousands have more or less the same story to tell or even worse. But his has been imprinted in my heart. Because in my young career as a teacher, it was the first time I tried to make someone abandon the path to self-destruction. I felt I must do something to save him. At least I tried.

Even if I have not managed to change him, I was glad to have befriended this fragile, young soul. Within the short time I was tutoring him, I earned his respect. He became like a brother to me.

I cannot say whether Andy still has a future or if his dreams are dead. I didn't believe he would fulfill the promise he made to me. Breaking what had become a habit and an addiction was going to be very difficult for him. But still, I hope. Even if it is hard for me to believe it will ever come true.

The lessons I have learned from Andy will always remain in my memory. He was a tough challenge for an impatient greenhorn like me. Because I never did what he was doing, even in my teens, I could only guess what he was going through. I never understood his world. But still I tried what I could to change him and make him turn his back on the dark and scary world he found himself in.

Elaine, 25, is a grade school teacher in a private school in Mindanao.

Suspicious circumstances behind Sipalay farmer's death

LETTERS to the editor have been published in the INQUIRER concerning the death of Moreto Arcadenia, a poor farmer, at the Silliman University Medical Center in Dumaguete on Christmas Eve. The letters of Dr. Pedro R. Solis and Capt. Lyndon J. Sollesta were desperate attempts to deny that torture was committed by the 61st Infantry Battalion. But as one who witnessed the condition of Arcadenia at the hospital, I must take issue with both.

As a resident of Negros Oriental, I disagree with Dr. Solis' claim that "the rebels and the left-leaning organizations in our province took advantage of the situation in order to deflect some of the bad reputation they have earned." Those who tried to save the life of Arcadenia were not the rebels and left-leaning organizations. They were common people with a common concern to see that his life be saved to care for his five children and to tell his story to the world. The people of Negros want the truth and every effort was made to give him a chance to tell the truth about what happened to him.

The truth, lest we forget, has nothing to do with the rebels or left-leaning groups. It has to do with the Armed Forces of the Philippines and whether, while in the custody of the 66th Infantry Battalion, he was tortured or not. I will not dwell further on "Dr. Solis'" claim because after making an effort to reach him, I have discovered that no one by that name lives in Manlocahoc, Sipalay.

The letter of Sollesta is based on an investigation conducted by the 303rd Infantry Brigade. From what I have gathered from the family of Arcadenia and other witnesses, I can agree with Sollesta that 'soldiers who conducted pursuit operations questioned suspicious-looking males in the area...one of them...Moreto Arcadenia" and that "the men were brought to an Army detachment in Baras-Barasan."

I cannot agree, however, with his explanation that "in the course of their transfer, some suffered lacerations and hematoma because of the rocky terrain."

First, it is highly doubtful that in transferring men through an area where they have lived all their lives, they would suffer injuries because of the terrain. Second, it seems suspicious that Major Aying would direct that Arcadenia be brought from the Army detachment in Negros Occidental across the provincial boundary to a hospital in Negros Oriental for treatment when a comparable regional hospital is much closer. Third, it is suspicious that when Arcadenia was admitted to the Negros Oriental Provincial Hospital, the military escorts who were assigned to him, identified themselves as members if his family and gave his name as "Tretar."

The people of Negros want to know the truth because they are a people who want peace and a people who will stand up against ruthless injustice in any form.

—PROF. CARLTON J. PALM, Silliman University Dumaguete

Affront to sovereignty

I FIND it a most vicious affront to national sovereignty that the United States government wants to use the Philippines as a training ground for its forces deployed in the Pacific because of restrictions imposed in its existing facilities in Japan and Thailand. Maj. Gen. Emmanuel Teodisio, deputy chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, has been quoted as saying that the US was "very appreciative" of the Philippine government's willingness to make available training facilities to US troops.

It's not the problem or the burden of the Philippines to help the United States find "suitable training grounds." The US is one of the biggest countries in the world, and it can and should use its own land area and bodies of water to train its own troops. The Philippines is not a playground for US troops.

According to reports, the US military has requested the AFP to make available at least 2,000 hectares for training activities. The US troops want to practice maneuvers using their watercraft and amphibious vehicles. Such a big area is more than the land allotted to farmers and indigenous peoples demanding genuine agrarian reform and the return of ancestral lands to minorities.

I appeal to members of the House of Representatives to oppose Bayanihan 2003 and to call for a complete ban on US troops and US military activities in the country. I appeal to my colleagues' sense of nationalism and patriotism to oppose the continued presence of US troops. The one-sided and treacherous military agreements forged with the US, such as the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA), should be immediately junked. There is nothing mutual in these infamous treaties. The US government is using the Philippines as a theme park and playground for its troops and a launching pad for its wars of aggression against the people of other countries.

—REP. CRISPIN BELTRAN, Bayan Muna

A series of booboos by the NBI

AS AN ordinary citizen, I am amazed at how the National Bureau of Investigation, supposedly the premier government investigating agency, goes about its job of determining suspects in many cases.

Look at what the NBI did to the supposed owner of a motorcycle whom the agency tagged as the main suspect in the killing of an Ateneo law graduate after a traffic incident in Pasay City last Jan. 10. For several days, NBI officials identified a former owner of the motorcycle as the principal suspect, putting in extreme danger his life and those of the members of his family. There were even hints that a shoot-to-kill order might be issued against the suspect. When trader Cola Didato finally turned up at the NBI headquarters with his wife and their month-old son, he told the NBI he had sold his motorcycle to a certain Ishmail Bilal, who in turn sold it to Mubarak Batao, who later sold it to the wife of new alleged assailant Bashir Abdulrahman, alias Bashir Sultan. Now Didato has become a state witness while the NBI pursues the case against the new suspect.

What is happening to the NBI under its new leadership? Has it lost its credibility? I remember some months back NBI officials even tried implicate Acsa Ramirez, the Land Bank employee who exposed the tax deposit scam in the bank, when the agency presented her as a "suspect" to President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was visiting the NBI at the time.

A suspect becomes a witness, while a witness becomes a suspect. When will NBI officials get their act together to regain the confidence of the people?

—Albert Sistina, Golden City, Taytay, Rizal

SIEMENS

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

Siemens Power Operations, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Siemens AG of Germany, congratulates **FGP Corp.** on the occasion of the inauguration of the **500 MW San Lorenzo Power Plant** in Batangas.

The inauguration of the plant symbolizes the completion of yet another major Philippine project.

Siemens AG and Siemens Power Operations, Inc. are proud to have built, and now operate and maintain the San Lorenzo power plant which is capable of delivering 500 MW of power in addition to the Santa Rita plant's 1000 MW capacity.

Siemens Power Operations, Inc. puts emphasis on Quality, Safety, Health and Environmental controls for the benefit of its customer as well as of the community.

Using state-of-the-art technology for single shaft combined cycle operation, the plant is gas/liquid fuel fired. The improved design allows for full efficiency and reliability, providing the Philippines with an environmentally friendly source of electricity.

Once again, congratulations to FGP Corp. for reaching this milestone.

Gerd Kirschen
EVP, Chief Executive Officer
Siemens Power Operations, Inc.

Voters not swayed by survey results

LAST Jan. 19, the Philippine Daily Inquirer's editorial was titled "A culture of surveys," and was accompanied by a cartoon of a simpleton-looking Juan de la Cruz filling in a ballot labeled "2004 elections" with a pen marked "POLL RESULTS."

Contrary to the cartoonist's message, election pollsters (real ones, that is) have neither the intention nor the capacity to sway votes in any particular direction. Indeed, it is because voters are not influenced by surveys that surveys are as accurate as they are. Think of it: If voters systematically switched to leading candidates, then the survey predictions would always underestimate the winning margins; in fact, the prediction errors are small, and overestimates are as common as underestimates.

The INQUIRER calls it "ironic" that most Filipinos, according to SWS, see no need for Charter amendment, and at the same time know very little about the Constitution. The INQUIRER says it has no quarrel with the numbers but wonders about their usefulness.

In fact, the numbers are both reasonable and useful. It makes more sense that it is knowledgeable, rather than ignorant, persons who form ideas on how to improve the Constitution, and it is useful for proponents, and even for journalists, to realize how much public education is needed in order for such ideas to be appreciated.

The INQUIRER observes that the modern poll is used "not only to measure public sentiment but also to shape public policy, party platform, even personal principle." No doubt, the polls are quite useful to those for whom, says the INQUIRER, "popularity comes first, and policy, platform and principle come later (if at all)."

Suppose we call those who consider principle first and popularity later (if at all) the Good Politicians. Amending the Constitution is an issue for which even Good Politicians must ultimately take account of the popular will as gauged by scientific polls. Neither Bad nor Good Politicians should take for granted that Filipinos, for sheer lack of education, will automatically ratify whatever amendments a constitutional convention or constituent assembly may propose.

—MAHAR MANGAHAS, president, Social Weather Stations

Names illegally used in newspaper ad

ON JAN. 16, 2003, the Philippine Daily Inquirer and another broadsheet carried a paid advertisement titled "Is it substantial compliance or compliance was substantial?" This ad carried the signature of the undersigned and impugned the integrity of former Environment Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez.

We want to deny the strongest terms the accusations raised in the paid ad and protest the unlawful use of our names and signatures. We state that:

1. Arthur J. Baltazar is not the president of the Association of Barangay Chairmen. He is the head of the Association of Barangay Councils.
2. There is no group in Moncayo called Naboc River Farmers/Irrigators Cooperative.
3. We were never informed about the ad. Neither were we asked to affix our signature to the published statement.
4. We do not have the capacity to pay for a high-profile advertisement which can run into hundreds of thousands of pesos.
5. We believe in the efforts of the Macapagal administration to resolve the Mt. Diwata issue, a concern that runs contrary to the inflammatory ad.

We cannot pay for a full-page advertisement so we hope you can give this letter space in your paper.

—ARTHUR J. BALTAZAR, president, Association of Barangay Councils, Moncayo Compostela Valley Province; ROMEO A. DISTO, Upper Naboc Communal Irrigators Association, Tubo-tubo, Moncayo, Compostela Valley

Families and social justice

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WHILE the world meeting on families was going on, I was dealing with a series of family crises. No, they weren't crises in my own family but in the families of others, of domestic helpers specifically.

First, a relative complained to me that one of her household helpers wanted to go home to Mindanao. The helper had started working for her only two months ago and now wanted to borrow money for her boat fare to Mindanao. I asked what the emergency was and the answer was not unexpected: a 16-year-old daughter who'd gotten pregnant and now wanted to get married.

I talked with the helper and explained there was little she could do because, in the first place, her daughter could not get married yet, the minimum legal age now being 18. But the helper argued that several of her friends—also domestic helpers—had their pregnant daughters married off, one even as young as 15. She said local barangay officials help out here, filling in a fake age on the marriage certificate to make sure the young girls could get married.

This faking of the age by barangay officials, which I've found is quite widespread, tells us a lot about our fixation over getting young girls married simply because they're pregnant. But that's another issue altogether. What I did want to highlight is the very turbulent lives of domestic helpers, an issue that we often prefer not to confront.

Let me give another example. Over the last few weeks, a close friend has been calling me, wailing about how her household helper, who comes from Cagayan Valley, has racked up debts totaling P50,000 to deal with a never-ending series of emergencies with her children, all of them left in the province: a son with dengue, a daughter with problems in school and finally, still another daughter getting pregnant—again.

I knew of that pregnant daughter from three years back because this helper was always "ambushing" me on the phone, asking for advice, with enough sob stories for several episodes of "Maalaala Mo Kaya." First the daughter was seeing a boy (read sleeping with the boy), then she'd gotten pregnant when she was 17 but couldn't get married. So they waited and the girl was married off at 18. Then they thought of family planning and I suggested they go to a health center.

The girl went on pills but stopped because she was not "*hiyang*," which, loosely translated, means the pills didn't seem to "fit" her. They then tried condoms, once, and the husband refused to use them again because they were "too tight."

When I suggested natural family planning (with reservations, I must say, because my experience is that it is so difficult with teenage couples, partly because the girl's menstrual cycles are still irregular and the boys, well, the boys won't sleep outside the mosquito net), the couple claimed it wasn't being offered in their area, by the government or by the Catholic Church.

Now the girl is pregnant with her second child. The household helper, who is 38, isn't exactly excited about having a second grandchild and wonders if all these problems are "*malas*," bad luck, or "*subok*," God testing her faith.

We worry about how millions of overseas Filipino workers who have to leave their families behind and forget there are also hundreds of thousands, maybe even millions, of Filipinos working here in the Philippines who have to leave their families behind in rural areas when they go off to work in the cities, as household helpers, construction workers or security guards.

One could argue that these migrants are lucky because they're still in the Philippines, but the bulk of these migrant workers get such low salaries that they rarely get to go home, which makes for even more bitter irony considering how "close" their home provinces are.

The first household helper I mentioned, the one from Mindanao, is 42 years old and has six children. She came to Manila to work a few years ago, when she had "only" four children. She returned home for a vacation and ended up staying much longer, having two more children, and then, pressured by having to support six kids, returned to Manila to find work. She now frets about her youngest, a 2-year-old toddler, as well as the grandchild about to be born.

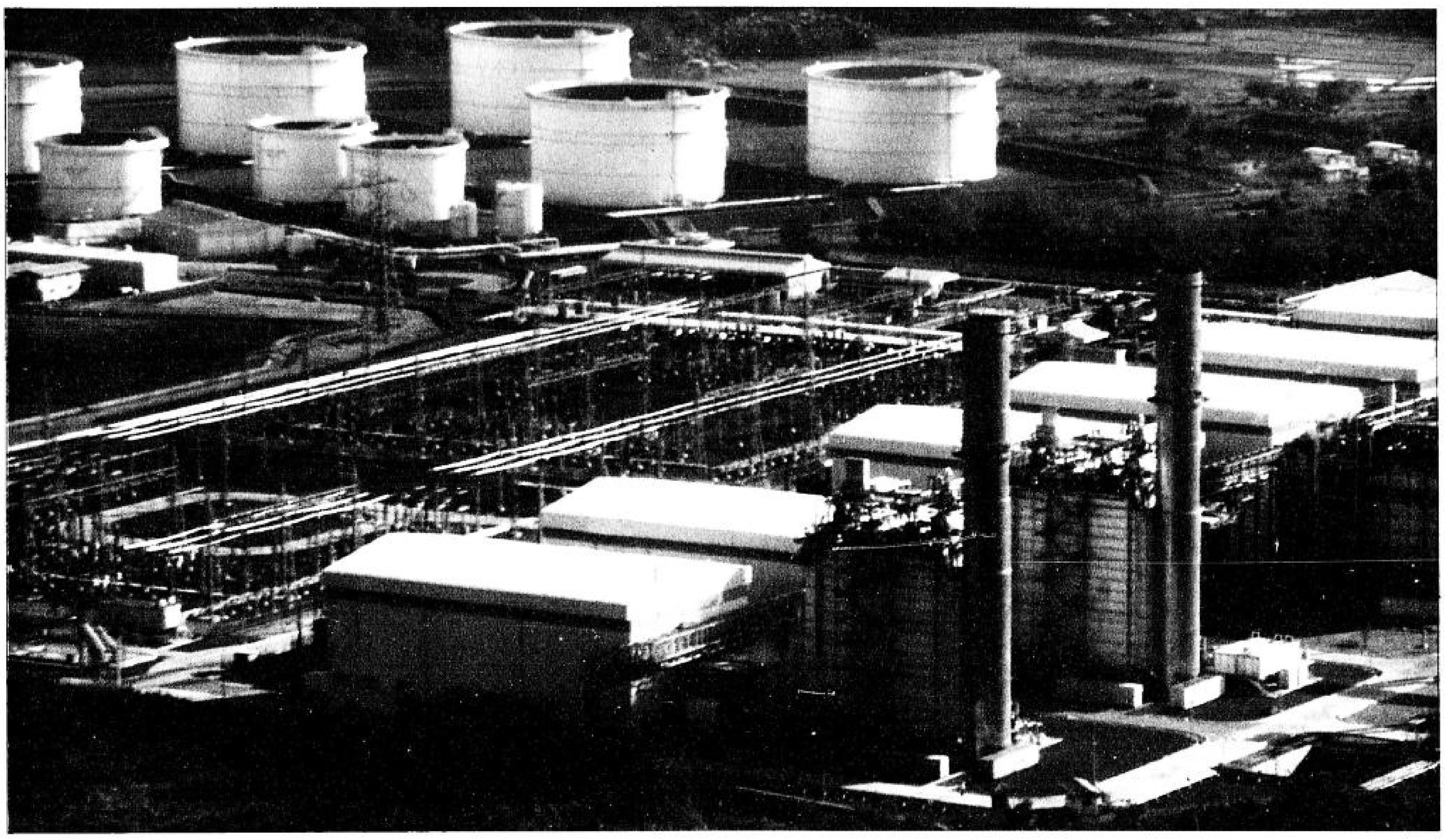
There are issues of social justice that need to be tackled. How many employers allow their helpers to return home at least once a year? How many shoulder the transportation expenses? How many talk with their household helpers about family issues, from family planning to responsible parenting?

Many readers are familiar with the problems of our migrants: the males, even with small salaries, will end up with several wives, one back home and several here in the city. The debts never end, with the never-ending problems with the wives and a dozen or so children. The women, on the other hand, will end up with several children by different fathers—a security guard in the subdivision, a family driver—with the fathers disappearing as soon as they get their girlfriends pregnant. The children are often sent back to the provinces to be cared for by grandparents.

The problems can be so convoluted. My friend's Ilocana helper gets P7,500 a month, plus free board and lodging, but is always borrowing money not just for emergencies but for "*baon*" (allowances) for the children. I've explained to my exasperated friend that the irrational budgeting is itself an effect of the helper's separation from her children: she's obviously trying to buy back their affection, thinking she can make up for having left them behind so she could work in Manila.

I have two other friends who have household helpers about to retire, and both agree they are not about to give the helpers their retirement pay in bulk because they know, from experience, the helpers will spend all their money within a month or two. These are, again, helpers who left their children in the provinces and are always trying to "bribe" their way back into their children's hearts after being absent for so long.

The last world meeting on families seems to have focused their concerns on the disruptive effects of "secularization" and "modernization" on the Filipino family. I think we need to pay more attention to the way Filipinos—employees like domestic helpers, as well as their employers—are shackled by feudal traditional values. There has never been any real "family" life for so many of our poor, one lost generation following another, rootless, drifting, despondent.



FGP Corp.'s 500-MW San Lorenzo Power Plant

A PROMISE FULFILLED

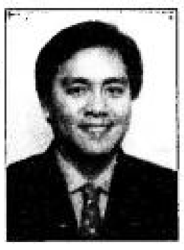
MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

I extend my warmest felicitations to the men and women of **First Gas** on the *Inauguration of the San Lorenzo 500 MW Power Plant.*

This occasion marks the completion of First Gas' final commitment towards building a total of 1,500 MW of generating capacity as part of its contribution to making the Malampaya Gas-to-Power Project a reality. This endeavor is a testimony to the crucial role the private sector plays in the country's drive for self-sufficiency and technological leadership in energy production.

I commend First Gas for its invaluable contribution to power development and nation building. Congratulations and *Mabuhay*!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Once again, we are witnessing another historic phase in the natural gas industry. The inauguration of the 500-megawatt San Lorenzo combined-cycle power plant completes the loop of the Malampaya deep water gas-to-power project as it joins Sta. Rita and Kepco Ilijan projects in commercial operation.

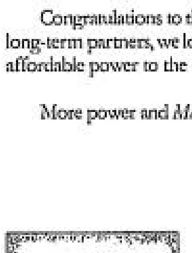
With a total investment cost of about $500 million, the San Lorenzo Power Plant plays a critical role in improving the country's energy self-sufficiency as it is instrumental in bringing the indigenous energy source level to more than 53 percent.

This is likewise an investment that will surely extend beyond our lifetime as it will give the next generation cleaner air and assured supply of energy.

Congratulations to the officials and staff of First Gas for undertaking this project. As long-term partners, we look forward to working closely with you in delivering reliable and affordable power to the Filipino people.

More power and *Mabuhay*!

VINCENT S. PEREZ, JR.
Secretary



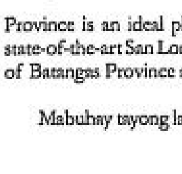
Republic of the Philippines
Province of Batangas
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Capitol Bldg., Batangas City 4200

Congratulations to First Gas for yet another milestone, the completion of the construction of the 500 MW San Lorenzo Power Plant, a world class power generating facility.

This achievement is a testament that Batangas Province is an ideal place for the infrastructure projects and for investments. The state-of-the-art San Lorenzo Power Plant will further boost the industrialization efforts of Batangas Province and the Philippines as a whole.

Mabuhay tayong lahat.

HERMILANDO I. MANDANAS
Governor
Province of Batangas



Republic of the Philippines
Batangas City
Office of the City Mayor

Congratulations to First Gas in the inauguration of the San Lorenzo 500 MW Power Plant. As a Batangueño, I am proud that hundreds of my Kababayans contributed to the completion of this state-of-the-art power generating facility.

I am very pleased that First Gas chose to locate the San Lorenzo Power Plant in Sta. Rita, Batangas City. With San Lorenzo following Santa Rita, our city is now the site of the biggest power generating facility in the country today.

Mabuhay ang First Gas! Mabuhay ang mga Batangueño!

EDUARDO B. DIMACUHA
City Mayor

Eleven years ago, the country's first natural gas field was discovered off the coast of Palawan, reviving the Filipino's dream of becoming self-sufficient in energy.

For this dream to become a reality, an anchor demand for the Malampaya natural gas had to be built up. The only way to create such a rapid build-up needed to satisfy the developers of the field was through power generation.

Rising up to the challenge, First Gas Holdings Corp, a partnership between the Lopez Group's First Philippine Holdings Corp. and BG plc., set out on a seven-year journey to develop, finance and build the 1,000-MW Sta. Rita and the 500-MW San Lorenzo plants.

Today, Jan. 28, 2003, the dream has finally become a reality.

The inauguration of the San Lorenzo Power Plant completes our 1,500-MW commitment to utilize the country's first commercial natural gas find.

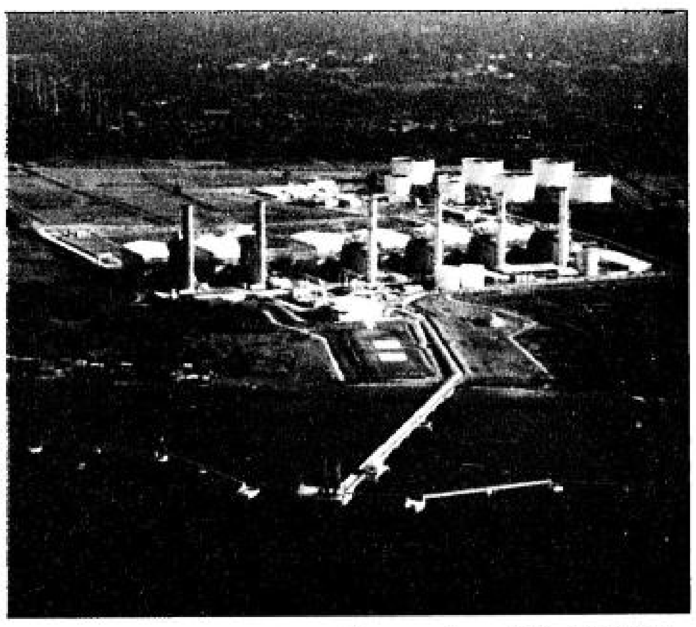
The 500-MW San Lorenzo plant boasts of the most advanced and efficient combined cycle gas turbine (CCGT) technology of Siemens, is environment-friendly and built by Filipinos in partnership with the best in the world.

Truly, a world-class power plant the Filipino can be proud of.

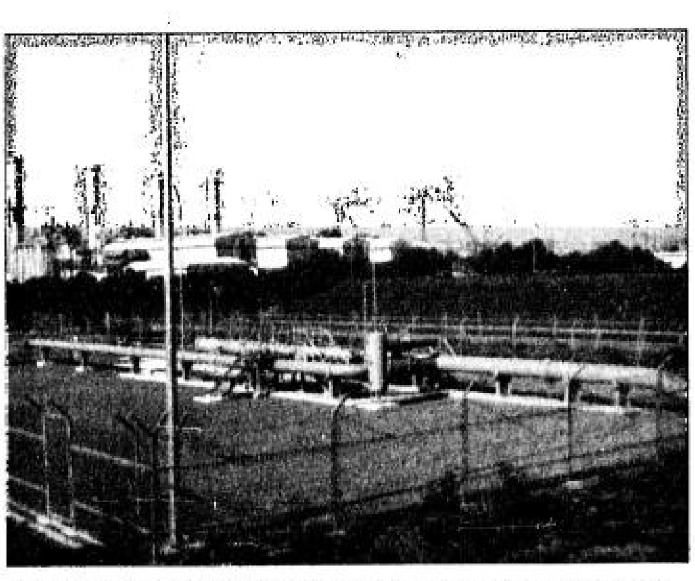
First Gas
HOLDINGS CORPORATION

500-MW SAN LORENZO POWER PLANT PROJECT

The 500 MW San Lorenzo Project is one of the fastest infrastructure projects to reach financial close in Asia, a feat achieved at the height of the Asian financial crisis.



The 500 MW San Lorenzo Power Plant, together with the 1,000 MW Sta. Rita power plant is the country's largest, most efficient and most advanced power generation plant.



The downstream terminal of the 8-km Tabangao to Sta. Rita pipeline, the Philippine's first on-shore natural gas transmission pipeline system.

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

US dubious about UN arms report

WASHINGTON—With Secretary of State Colin Powell questioning the ability of UN weapons inspectors to do their jobs, top Bush administration officials see little hope the inspectors will report that Saddam Hussein is ridding his country of weapons of mass destruction.

"I think the real headline is, no proof that Saddam Hussein is complying with the United Nations in disarming," White House chief of staff Andrew Card said Sunday on NBC television. He spoke before inspectors were to present reports in New York on their assessments of Iraq's compliance to the Security Council.

Saddam must "bring all of his weapons of mass destruction forward so they can be destroyed and to comply fully with the UN expectations," Card said on Fox television.

Asked whether he thinks that will happen, Card said: "I don't think there's much of a chance he'll do it. There's nothing in his past actions that would suggest that he's going to comply."

Powell, citing Iraq's lack of cooperation with UN inspectors, said he had lost faith in the inspectors' ability to conduct a definitive search for banned weapons.

A US-led war to oust the Iraqi leader, is not imminent, Powell told business and political leaders at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland. He also did not explicitly call for the inspections to end.

White House communications director Dan Bartlett said that "instead of finally coming clean, finally saying the game is up, (Saddam) has not.

"In fact, he is taking active and aggressive steps to avoid detection of his weapons of mass terror," Bartlett said on CNN. "These are the worst weapons that can do harm to the entire civilized world, and it's our obligation to make sure we remove them."

As the war talk intensified, President George W. Bush on Sunday rehearsed a State of the Union speech that is meant to confront Americans' doubts about an attack on Iraq and to sell his plans for new tax cuts.

Bush attended church and jogged, then went behind closed doors to practice the address with confidant Karen Hughes. He had no public appearances scheduled Monday, giving himself plenty of time to prepare for the Tuesday night address.

Officials in both Baghdad and Washington seemed resigned to the inevitability of war.

Amir al-Saadi, the Iraqi president's science adviser, said over the weekend that Iraq had cooperated fully, but that an invasion appeared unstoppable, no matter what Baghdad did.

Bush's challenge in persuading the public of the need for war was underlined in recent polls. More than half—53 percent—responding to a poll by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press said the president had not yet explained clearly what was at stake to justify war.

Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota said Sunday, "We ought not be rushing to war." He also urged the White House to work harder to assemble an international coalition before deciding to go into Iraq. *AP*

Iraqis wary but hopeful war is not imminent

BAGHDAD—Iraqis waited for their UN judgment day Monday, confident they would get a "gray" report, a passing grade, for accepting arms inspections, but wary of UN complaints that could help tilt the balance between war and peace.

"The problem is with the United States," teacher Ahmed Falah, 43, told a reporter on a Baghdad street. "It might exploit this report as a pretext to attack us."

On the eve of the interim UN inspectors' assessment, President Saddam Hussein convened a joint meeting of his ruling Baath Party's leadership and the Revolution Command Council, Iraq's highest executive body, to discuss what official media called "political conditions."

No statement was issued afterward. "It's reached the point where Iraq can only react. It can't do anything," said a senior Baghdad diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity. "It's all up to Blix."

Chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the UN nuclear agency, will report Monday to the UN Security Council on what their arms teams have found and how well Iraq has cooperated in the first two months of their search for programs of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons, forbidden to Iraq since its defeat in the 1991 Gulf War.

Hossam Mohammed Amin, the general who is the inspectors' chief Iraqi liaison, said last week he didn't expect a "100-percent white" report. Blix has complained, for example, about Iraq's resistance to American reconnaissance overflights on behalf of the UN effort. Instead, Amin said, Iraq expected a "gray" report.

Washington and London contend they know Baghdad retains weapons of mass destruction and say a refusal to surrender them may bring on a US-British invasion. But the two governments have presented no proof, and much of the world wants the Security Council to allow inspections more time. *AP*

CHILDREN
P
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MUSLIM women activists hold a "peace" banner during an anti-US rally outside the US and British embassies in Jakarta on Jan. 27. Anti-US protests and demonstrations were also held in other Asian cities.

AFP

US war on Iraq unlikely to get UN nod

UNITED NATIONS—Here's a look at the different views held by the 15 Security Council members regarding potential military action in Iraq:

The five permanent members with veto power:

- **United States.** Says Iraq is developing weapons of mass destruction, is failing to cooperate with weapons inspectors and is violating its obligations under UN resolutions. Says it already has Security Council authorization to use military force to disarm Iraq.
- **Russia.** Says Iraq is cooperating with inspectors, has said there is no evidence Iraq is rearming, and wants economic sanctions, imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, to eventually be lifted. Says the council must authorize any use of force.
- **China.** Has indicated it believes inspections are starting to work and Iraq can be disarmed peacefully. It wants inspectors to be given more time to do their jobs. Believes the council must authorize any use of force.
- **Britain.** Prefers a second Security Council resolution authorizing any military action, but is expected to join US-led action without one. Says Iraq is not cooperating or disarming and that time is running out for it to do so through weapons inspections.
- **France.** Says inspections are starting to work and sees no justification for military action now. Paris has hinted it could use its veto to block council authorization for military action at this stage.

The 10 members elected members without veto power:

- **Angola.** Waiting for a report Monday from weapons inspectors before announcing its position.
- **Bulgaria.** Backs a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Iraq, with leaders expressing strong support for ongoing inspections. Could support US-led military intervention without a Security Council authorization.
- **Cameroon.** Supports continued inspections. Has not taken a position regarding military action.
- **Chile.** Waiting for a report Monday from weapons inspectors before announcing its position.
- **Guinea.** Supports continued inspections. Has not taken a position regarding military action.
- **Germany.** Insists Iraq must be disarmed peacefully and has said it will not participate in any military intervention, even if the Security Council authorizes such action.
- **Mexico.** Supports continued weapons inspections. Could support military intervention authorized by the Security Council.
- **Pakistan.** Supports continued weapons inspections and a diplomatic resolution of the conflict.
- **Syria.** Says Iraq is cooperating with its obligations under UN resolutions and that sanctions should be lifted.
- **Spain.** Supports the Bush administration's stance on Iraq. Believes military intervention could proceed without Security Council authorization. *AP*

South Korea engineers stop spread of Slammer

SEOUL—Internet system engineers thwarted further disruption Monday from a highly-contagious computer virus that crippled South Korea's online networks at the weekend, officials said.

Security solution experts and system engineers at firms, banks and government agencies were placed on alert to stop the spread of the "Sapphire" or "SQL Slammer" worm that caused South Korea's worst-ever telecommunications breakdown.

The worm crippled Internet traffic for nearly eight hours from 0500 GMT Saturday and paralyzed online shopping and banking services.

Traffic remained slow Monday, but there were no major disruptions reported, the Information and Communication Ministry said after an urgent survey of key networks.

"The operation of major Internet service providers (ISPs) has been normal so far today," said Kim Chang-Gon, head of the ministry's Internet department.

After a tense watch in the morning, the ministry said South Korean Internet services appeared to be free of the Slammer worm.

The virus carries a self-regenerating mechanism that allows it to multiply quickly across the Internet. It targets a previously identified weakness in Microsoft Corp.'s database software "SQL Server 2000." The ministry said more than 200 of the country's 50,000 SQL servers were infected by the virus.

Banks and stock brokerages downloaded patches from Microsoft's website or reinforced security firewalls.

President Kim Dae-Jung instructed his administration to prevent future crashes.

"The president expresses regret over the incident and related government agencies promise to do their best to find the cause and take proper countermeasures," his spokespeson Park Sun-Sook said.

Internet security experts here blamed the lack of Internet security at South Korean ISPs. Politicians lashed out at government negligence. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Complaints on televised autopsy

LONDON—Television regulators said Monday that a broadcast of an autopsy "approached the limits" of taste and decency but did not overstep the bounds, despite more than a hundred complaints from viewers. Channel 4 television presented a delayed telecast on Nov. 21 of an autopsy conducted by Prof. Gunther von Hagens before a paying audience in London, where his "Body Worlds" exhibition of preserved human corpses has already courted controversy. Von Hagens, who said he wanted to allow the public into the medical world, said the autopsy on the body of a 72-year-old man was a "huge success." *AP*

Defective condoms in China

BEIJING—Men in AIDS-threatened China buy roughly three condoms a year, and the ones they purchase are highly likely to have defects, state media reported Monday. Annual sales of condoms in China now stand at two billion a year, the China Youth Daily said, citing data from the State Family Planning Commission. With a male population of about 650 million, this means each Chinese man buys three condoms on average annually, and if he is lucky only one of them will have flaws. The paper said that between 30 and 44 percent of all condoms on sale in China fail to meet industry standards. *AFP*

Chavez threatens price controls

CARACAS, Venezuela—President Hugo Chavez said he would put in place price and currency controls as Venezuela's economy heads for a tailspin stemming from an opposition strike, which was entering its ninth week Monday. "So that these (currency) controls do not hurt the poor, we will institute price controls," Chavez said Sunday in Porto Alegre, Brazil, at the World Social Forum. *AP*

Priest convicted of sex abuse

HONG KONG—A former Roman Catholic priest was convicted Monday of molesting a 15-year-old altar boy then ordered to jail while he awaits sentencing in a pedophilia-and-coverup case that rocked Hong Kong's Church. Michael Lau said nothing in court and showed no emotion as a judge found him guilty of two counts of indecent assault, one of attempted sodomy and one of gross indecency. District Court Judge Maggie Poon ordered psychiatric and psychological testing for the 42-year-old Lau before she sentences him on Feb. 17 for the crimes committed more than a decade ago. *AP*

Singaporeans oppose eye organ donations

SINGAPORE—Some members of Singapore's Chinese community have opposed a proposal to include eyes in the national organ donor program, saying they will need them in the afterlife, a newspaper reported Monday.

The government has begun gauging public opinion over whether the city-state's 16-year-old organ donor law should be expanded to include corneas and livers—and possibly hearts and lungs—instead of just kidneys, the Straits Times newspaper said.

Under the current law, all Singaporeans, except Muslims, are considered organ donors unless they opt out. Muslims must sign up individually for religious reasons.

Community members told a parliamentary committee on Sunday they would not agree to give up any part of their eyes after death because of their belief in reincarnation, the report said. Many in the predominantly Chinese country are Buddhists and Taoists, who believe that if their eyes are removed, they will be blind—or have no eyes at all—in their next life.

Some also opposed the cornea donations because eyes were not considered necessary to save lives, the report said.

People were not moved by medical experts' explanations that only the top 2 millimeters of the eyes would be removed, the report said.

Dr. Lily Neo, chair of the parliamentary committee, told the newspaper she would "tread more carefully" at future community meetings where the new proposals would be discussed.

The government is also looking at ways to expand the donor plan to include Muslims who are not automatically covered. Although Muslims do not oppose organ donations, Islamic law requires the donor's active consent rather than the government's presumed consent.

Despite the traditional beliefs that run deep through Singaporean society, the wealthy island nation is trying to become a hub for medical and biotech research by actively recruiting international experts. *AP*

Sharon's party assured of victory

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's right-wing Likud party is assured of victory in Tuesday's legislative elections, according to three opinion polls published on the eve of the vote.

Likud is set to become the biggest party in the Knesset by winning 33 of the 120 parliamentary seats, according to a poll by the Yediot Aharonot daily published Monday. Likud currently holds 19 seats.

The Labor party, led by Amram Mitzna who is considered a "dove," can expect 18-19 seats, which would be its lowest tally since the first Israeli elections in 1949, according to the poll. Labor currently holds 25 seats in the Knesset.

Tommy Lapid's secular and centrist Shinui party is set for a spectacular parliamentary breakthrough to become the third party with 16 seats, 10 more than it currently holds.

Polls published in the Maariv and Haaretz dailies offered similar predictions, differing by a seat or two from the Yediot Aharonot survey.

No pollsters believe that Likud will win enough seats to govern alone in the next parliament and are sure that Sharon will have to go looking for alliance partners.

An alliance with the extreme right and religious parties could give him a working majority of 64 or 65 seats in the 120-seat chamber, according to the opinion polls.

Sharon would prefer a broad government of national unity with Labor to reinforce Israel's position abroad, but the Labor party has categorically ruled out that option.

The pollsters canvassed between 800 and 1,500 voters to collate their predictions, with a margin of error of up to 3.5 percent. *AFP*

SHARON

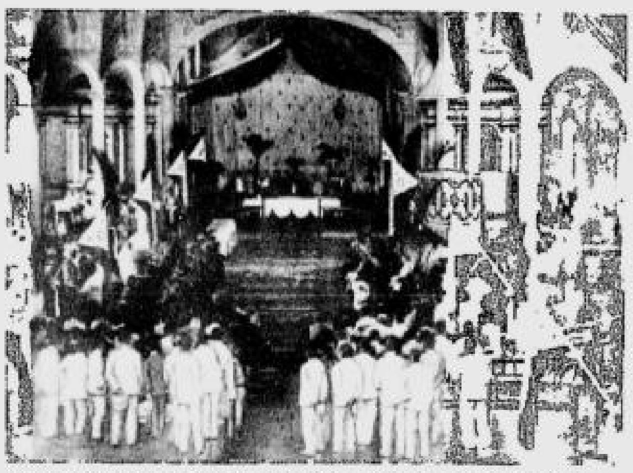
THE TIMES CALL FOR CHARTER CHANGE NOW!

THE CASE FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

A clear national consensus for amending the 1987 Constitution is growing steadily. The principle has now been accepted by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and by former President Corazon C. Aquino, under whose patronage the charter had been written. The only questions that remain are those of how and when. We believe that the fastest and easiest way is by convening Congress as a Constituent Assembly. **Some propose calling a Constitutional Convention in May 2004. But such a convention will not only be costly. Its key amendments will not even take effect until the end of the next presidential cycle – in 2010. And if – as most everyone now agrees – charter change has become necessary, why should we wait that long to get it done? Aanhin pa ang damo, kung patay na ang kabayo?** No, eight years is far too long -- in our age of globalization, technological revolution, and economic interdependence – for our people to wait.

OUR PEOPLE CANNOT AFFORD TO WAIT

Filipinos want constitutional change because the ineficiency and inflexibility of the present system have begun to affect their daily lives. Political gridlocks caused by rivalries between President and Congress have more than once brought the whole of government to a standstill. **Protectionist principles embedded in the 1987 charter – by blocking the flow of foreign capital, technology, and production skills into our economy – have made our country the poorest among all comparable economies of East Asia.** Political parties grouped around charismatic personalities instead of platforms and programs of government have made sheer popularity – instead of intelligence and competence – the highest qualification for winning public office.



The 1898 Malolos Congress was parliamentary.

ADVANTAGES OF A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

A Convention will cost P8billion in new money we don't have. An Assembly can make do using the funds normally allocated to the present Congress. And it can put the reformed system in place by the beginning of the next presidential cycle – in May 2004. **Even more important, the Joint Resolution calling for an Assembly can specify – and limit – the areas of revision it will be allowed to make. This will safeguard the 1987 charter from any partisan tinkering. No such restraint may be imposed on a Convention.**

THE AMENDMENTS WE SEEK

1. ***The basic change we seek is a shift from the presidential to a unicameral parliamentary system.*** Our presidential system we borrowed unexamined from the U.S. Constitution -- which was itself deliberately designed, some 320 years ago, to prevent strong central government. **Its elaborate system of checks and balances between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches is responsible for our democracy of stalemate.** The parliamentary system will not only make Philippine government more transparent and more accountable. It will allow our people to replace oppressive and corrupt Chief Executives without courting political schisms, constitutional crises, and even civil conflicts. **Unicameralism will make law-making a great deal simpler and more efficient – by doing away with the duplication of effort, the one-upman-ship, and the clashing ambitions that beset every two-chamber legislature.** The parliamentary system should also allow the peaceful expression of a broader range of political opinion that is now possible. And it should strengthen our political parties -- by encouraging them to differentiate themselves through their ideologies and programs of government.
2. ***We also seek the removal of its protectionist provisions from the 1987 charter.*** Limitations on their participation in key economic sectors such as agriculture, mining, and public utilities discourage foreign investors. **Our country recieves, on average, less than 6% of all the foreign direct investment that goes into the 10 Asean economies.**
3. ***We will also want the Assembly to consider the feasibility of a federal union for the Philippines.***

OUR COUNTRY NEEDS A NEW BEGINNING

Those who say constitutional change can wait until 2010 deny the urgency of our need for a new beginning. **People's loss of faith in our politics has become systematic. They now see not only individual leaders – but the political structure itself – as responsible for the way we have fallen behind most of our neighbors in the world's fastest – growing region.** And this loss of faith has led to a lack of confidence in this country's future. Already some seven million of our compatriots are in exile in 120 countries – and many more vote with their feet every day. ***The longer we wait the deeper we will sink in the quagmire we're in.*** We must assure our youth there is hope for this country. Charter change – now–is the call of the times. Heed our call to concerted civic action by affiliating with us now.

League of Governors of the Philippines
Gov. Rodolfo del Rosario, President

League of Cities of the Philippines
Tagaytay City Mayor Francis Tolentino, President

League of Municipalities of the Philippines
Binalonan Pangasinan Mayor Ramon Guico, Jr., President

DR. NONA RICAFORT, Phil. Fed. Of Bus. & Prof. Women • **TIMUAY RONALD ADAMAT**, Secretaryy-General, Tribal CommunityAssociation of the Phil. (TRICAP) • **AMBASSADOR RAUL I. GOCO** • **ATTY. TONY VILAR** • **FERNANDO PENA** – Chino Roces Foundation • **JESUS D. PERICO**, KILUSANG PAMBAYAN • **ROSIE S. YANES**, Tinig Kababaihan • **BERT SINGAPAN** • **JUAN "JOHNNY" B. MAGBITANG**, Presiding Officer, Sangguniang Bayan, San Ildefonso, Bulacan • **NICASIO V. ILLEGAS**, President Sambayanihan para sa Adhikaing Kaunlaran ng North East Bulacan (SAKNEB) • **CARMEN N. PEDROSA**, The Philippine Star • **MERISSA C. SOMES & JIM A. GAREN**, Founding Directors, The Right Path Movement • **RONITO SALAO**, President, Association of Barangay Captains, San Ildefonso, Bulacan • **JULIET GUEVARRA**, President Kababaihang Pinagpala ng BLISS, Malipampang, San Ildefonso, Bulacan • **TOM MORALES**, KASAMA OFW • **NANCY A. 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ROUNDUP

Bombs seized

VICTORIA, Laguna—Elements of the Army's 202nd Infantry Brigade recently seized eight bombs inside a nipa hut in a rubber plantation in Barangay Magsaysay, Siniloan, Laguna. Police said each bomb is made of about a pound of ammonium nitrate soaked in kerosene as explosive ingredients and placed in tin cans measuring four inches in diameter. ***Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

New DTI office

VICTORIA, Laguna—Starting Feb. 3, the Department of Trade and Industry in Laguna will hold office at the Varimco Building along Km 75 of the national highway in Barangay Banca-Banca this town. DTI-Laguna will make use of the 20-hectare Varimco Compound for cottage industry projects and showcases for products manufactured in the province. Susan R. Palo, officer-in-charge of DTI-Laguna, reminded DTI clients to transact business at the new office starting Feb. 3. The new telephone number is (049) 559-0151. ***Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Search stopped

DUMAGUETE CITY—Relatives and friends of missing Dutch Klaas Bisschop and brothers Marcel and Jacco Wilderom stopped their aerial search and decided to just wait for responses to fliers asking coastal residents to help locate the tourists and their two Filipino boatmen who have been missing since Dec. 18 while they were on their way to Apo Island, Negros Oriental from San Juan, Siquijor. Bart Koeman, a friend of the Wilderom brothers, said they scoured the waters south of the Philippines near the country's border with Malaysia but found no signs of their missing friends. ***Alex V. Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Collusion vs farmers

VARIOUS farmer groups (FGs) nationwide today charged the National Food Authority and the Land Bank of the Philippines with ignoring the directive of President Macapagal-Arroyo to give farmers priority access to government-approved rice import facilities. They claimed that the NFA and the Landbank are colluding to make certain that the farmers would not be able to comply with the requirement which they set for allowing farmers' groups to import 150,000 metric tons of rice. Jess Simon of the Provincial Farmers Action Council said in a press statement that the NFA and the Landbank drew up highly restrictive guidelines that would shut out farmers' groups from getting access to rice import allocations facilitated by the government with rice suppliers abroad. Simon cited one NFA guideline, which requires rice importers, including farmers' groups, to open letters of credit exclusively from Landbank, which would be paid in cash. The farmers' groups were given 15 days to open letters of credit before they are allowed to import rice.

Project revived

TAGBILARAN CITY—Mayor Jose Torralba has revived the controversial proposed 59-hectare Tagbilaran Bay Reclamation Project (TBRP) shelved for two years. Torralba, in his state of the city address, restated his position in favor of the P1.6 billion TBRP that was shelved by the city council after it drew multi-sectoral opposition spearheaded by the Concerned Citizens Against Reclamation. ***Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Wired

TACLOBAN CITY—Northern Samar Gov. Raul Daza has urged the Northern Samar Electric Cooperative (Norsamelco) to comply with the order of the Air Transportation Office (ATO) to relocate high-tension wires that Norsamelco installed at the Catarman airport compound so that the airport would be reopened. ***Vicente Labro, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Dumaguete dads debate over fixing dates for Xmas caroling

DUMAGUETE CITY—If Councilor George Sy had his way, Dumaguete folk would be forced to sing Christmas carols elsewhere in the province 11 months from now.

Sy introduced a proposed ordinance during the City Council session last Jan. 23 that would give individuals only two days during the entire holiday season—Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve—to sing their Christmas carols before homes in the city.

He pointed out that his proposed ordinance would prevent carolers, who roam from one house to another even late in the evenings, from being victimized by criminals.

But Councilor Franklin Esmena had a different view on the ordinance. He said the proposed measure would be good for politicians whose homes were frequented by carolers more than anyone else's.

He, however, raised one problem in the implementation of the ordinance once passed by the City Council. He said the city government did not have enough personnel to apprehend the erring carolers.

Not to worry, Sy assured. He said there was no need to hire extra personnel because under his proposed ordinance, the city government would only conduct a campaign to inform the public that they did not have to give money to the carolers on the dates that were not specified by the ordinance.

Councilor Nilo Sayson, however, pointed out that there is already an existing ordinance regulating caroling, allowing such activity only from Dec. 16 to Jan. 6. This ordinance, though, has never been enforced, according to some councilors. *Alex V. Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Uneasy peace descends on remote Lanao village where clan war kills 8

COTABATO CITY—An uneasy peace has descended on a remote village in Lanao del Sur where eight people were killed on Friday and Saturday as a result of a clan war.

Police in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao declared that the situation was back to normal in the village.

But two more villagers were reportedly killed early Sunday before police were able to stop the fighting.

The situation has been "normalized," according to Chief Supt. Akmad Omar, ARMM police chief.

Omar said investigators have been sent to the area to determine what triggered the killings in the coastal village of Banago where Maranaw and Tausug fishermen have been living harmoniously until Friday.

"We are still determining who really fired the first shot but I assure our people (that) the police are in control of the situation," Omar said.

Quoting a report from the Lanao del Sur police office, Omar said eight people have been confirmed dead in the fighting, including Atty. Cabili Ogca, municipal administrator of Balabagan town and brother (not husband as reported earlier) of town Mayor Edna Ogca Benito.

The mayor could not be reached for comment.

Also killed in the fighting were Cabili's militiamen escorts Arkula Abo and Bawing Resurreccion; Nasser Amal, Nor, Aleyon, Lincoln and Riza, all surnamed Ansal.

Omar said the conflict started when at about 1 p.m. Friday, Nasser Amal ran amuck and, using a Garand rifle, shot at any person in sight.

He said the shooting rampage started a melee. Witnesses said everyone seemed to be armed on that day. When the firing ceased, six people lay dead.

The following day, Omar said, supporters of the slain lawyer chanced upon a group of civilians who were later identified as relatives of Nasser Amal.

Councilor Gaudencio Teves of Parang, Maguindanao, said two more villagers were found dead in Barangay Banago and relatives blamed the killings on the followers of the slain town administrator.

But Omar insisted that the police reported that only eight people were killed.

"I will have it checked whether more than eight people were killed or not," he added.

Omar also assured commuters plying the Secretary Narciso Ramos Highway, the road network that links Cotabato and Marawi, that the highway is safe and traffic flow has been unhampered.

The fishing village of Dapdap turned into a ghost town on the two days that the killing went on, according to witnesses.

At least 100 people were prevented from leaving their homes by one of the groups of armed men.

Councilor Dodong Teves of nearby Parang, Maguindanao said those involved in the three-day armed conflict were members of the Maranaw and Tausug tribes.

But Teves had a different version of how the killings started.

"It all started with a fist fight that ballooned into a full-blown violence," Teves, who visited the area, told Church-run radio station dxMS here.

Roger Wahid, a Tausug who fled from the conflict, said among those killed were Tausug and Samal fishermen, while the other fatalities were Maranaws. *Edwin O. Fernandez, Charlie C. Señase and Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Computers' help sought for terraces

A THREATENED legacy, the rice terraces are nurtured by the hands of Ifugao women who continue to practice back-breaking farm techniques to prevent the terraces' death.

BEN MOSES EBREO

KIANGAN, Ifugao—The provincial government wants a computerized mapping of Ifugao's rice terraces to accurately check the rate of their deforestation and soil erosion.

Ifugao Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. has asked the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) to help the provincial government form a Geographical Information System (GIS) map for the rice terraces.

A GIS map is a computer-generated map from which different sets of information, including political boundaries, vegetation or roads, are instantly displayed and can be used for analysis.

Baguilat said they would use the GIS map to show how rice terraces are being used or underused. About a fourth of the terraces in Ifugao are abandoned, it was learned.

He said the GIS would also show the rate of deforestation in the watersheds and how they were affecting the rice terraces.

The provincial government is preparing a more realistic master development plan for the rice terraces, Baguilat said.

"The community should decide what areas to preserve, what terraces to be used for tourism, what watershed to preserve and where "*kaingin*" (slash-and-burn farming) would be allowed," he said.

"It would be foolhardy for us to preserve all the terraces," he said.

But Baguilat said the community should have the last say on the future of the terraces. "They should be given the option," he added.

For the GIS mapping of the terraces, Baguilat said they would use as reference the "Ethnographic Atlas of Ifugao" prepared by American anthropologist Harold Conklin and published in 1980.

The atlas chronicles the land use, terracing, crops and agrarian matter on the terraces in Ifugao.

"It would be interesting to see how the terraces have changed since 1980," Baguilat said.

To start the restoration of the rice terraces, the provincial government has revived the 12 Ifugao rice rituals that have not been performed for decades.

The Ifugao calendar of the 12 rice rites started last December and is expected to end in June or July. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Frustrated slay suspect's passport cancelled

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Austrian Embassy in Manila has cancelled the passport of a naturalized Austrian citizen who was arrested here to face frustrated murder charges in Vienna.

This was relayed in a fax message received by Supt. Louie Oppus, Tagbilaran police director, from Dr. Christian Krepela, Austrian ambassador to Manila.

Krepela said in his fax message that the withdrawal of the passport of Elixer Abucay Amora "should also be the legal basis" for Amora's continued custody "until his deportation back to Austria."

Krepela said he hoped the Austrian police officers would arrive in the Philippines to bring Amora back to Vienna to face charges.

Amora is charged with frustrated murder for allegedly stabbing his wife Maria Beverly twice on Sept. 16, 2002 in Vienna after she decided to divorce him.

Although both were born Boholanos, they have acquired Austrian citizenships.

Police arrested Amora on Jan. 15 based on a warrant from the Vienna Interpol through its Manila office.

But Amora's counsel filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus before Executive Judge Raineldo Son of the Regional Trial Court in Tagbilaran.

Amora's lawyer Nicodemus Tago, however, said the arrest and detention of Amora were "without warrant or . . . authority."

Oppus said Amora was arrested on the basis of the Interpol warrant.

Fishermen brave rain, now missing

DAVAO CITY—Braving the rain, they sailed off to catch fish and bring food to their families.

But it has been a week since three elderly fishermen went fishing in the Davao Gulf and failed to return.

Declared missing since Jan. 21 are Alonso Agos, Rogelio Mariano and Rodolfo Bandoquillo, all residents of Barangay Baun in San Isidro, Davao del Sur.

Mary Moratin, chief of the city agriculturist office, said the three must have been caught in a storm while fishing early dawn of Jan. 21 on board a pump boat.

"It was raining hard that time," Moratin said.

She said police and personnel of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources and Bantay Dagat have launched search and rescue operations.

Two other fishermen and a 9-year-old boy were declared missing after they left Roxas Boulevard of this city to fish. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Villagers fear pollution with plant's transfer

MEXICO, Pampanga—Protests continue against a plan to transfer a steel smelting plant to an agricultural area near 12 populated villages in this town.

Last week, the protesters who grouped themselves into the anti-steel plant coordinating committee (ASPCC), started a signature campaign in Barangays San Nicolas, Laug, Piring, San Roque, Sto. Domingo, San Antonio, Sta. Maria, San Pedro, San Lorenzo, San Carlos and Sto. Rosario.

These villages are within the 2-kilometer radius of the new site of the Elegant Steel in Sitio Canyo in Barangay San Nicolas, according to ASPCC chair Ner Sambile.

He said they launched the protests together with the Pampanga archdiocese's ministry of service and the Kilusan Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya after the company began preparing for the plant's transfer.

The current location of Elegant Steel is less than 500 meters away from the SM City in Lagundi, also in Mexico.

The company owner, Joseph Lim, said he was moving the plant because the current site had increased in commercial value.

Lormelyn Claudio, regional director of the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Luzon, confirmed that the Elegant Steel recently applied for an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) for the transfer.

The ASPCC, through a letter of appeal, urged the municipal council to reject the relocation, which it called a "dangerous move."

Once operational, the steel plant would pose "serious hazards to public health and the environment," the committee said.

In the appeal, the ASPCC cited several studies showing that air pollution from steel mills causes genetic damages that are passed on to the next generation of victims.

Sambile said there are 320 households near the proposed site that Lim bought from private landowner Roger Salas. Lands in the 12 villages are cultivated as farms and fishponds, which are the main sources of livelihood in the area.

Lim said he was installing an anti-pollution device in the new plant to address the concerns of the residents. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

A STATEMENT ON HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 918

(A Resolution that seeks to dismiss the impeachment complaint against Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco)

In view of House Resolution No. 918, the National Secretariat for Social Action-Justice & Peace (NASSA) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP):

AWARE of the scheduled Plenary Hearing of the House of Representatives starting 28 January 2003, where the House Committee on Justice will recommend, through House Resolution No. 918, the dismissal of the impeachment complaint against Commission on Elections Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco;

REMINDING members of the House of Representatives that it is their duty to uphold truth in the interest of justice;

REAFFIRMING the right of people to information relating to matters affecting them;

STRESSING the need for an investigation on the allegations against Commissioner Tancangco on grounds of *graft and corruption, betrayal of public trust, and culpable violation of the Constitution;*

BELIEVING that the acts of Commissioner Tancangco, as recited in the impeachment complaint, have caused undue injury to the Filipino people;

NOTING the judgment of the House Committee on Justice that the impeachment complaint is sufficient in form but insufficient in substance;

NOTING ALSO that the findings of the House Committee on Justice that the insufficiency in substance of the impeachment complaint is *PRELIMINARY*;

NOTING FURTHER that the House of Representatives, in a plenary session, has the authority to override this *PRELIMINARY* finding as to the insufficiency of the impeachment complaint;

COMMENDS honorable members of the House of Representatives, led by Congressman Monico Puentevella (Bacolod City), for their efforts in advocating the progress of the impeachment complaint;

URGES other honorable members of the House of Representatives to vote in favor of the sufficiency in substance of the impeachment complaint;

APPEALS to the conscientious judgment of the honorable members of the House of Representatives to ferret out the truth;

ENCOURAGES people to continue observing the progress of the impeachment complaint;

RESOLVES to consistently seek a prompt and just resolution of the matter.

The People vs Tancangco Movement

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Adv't.

MALACANANG DISPERSAL

Militant students opposing the RP-US Mutual Logistics and Supply Arrangement are dispersed by anti-riot policemen during their rally at Gate 7 of Malacañang.

ERIK ARAZAS

RP-US war games start; exercise not prelude . . .

From page A1

tion going on within the Philippines," he said.

He declined to answer questions on whether the Balance Piston was part of a counterterrorism training the two allied countries were implementing.

Just routine

"This is just one of a number of routine training events scheduled at the US Pacom (Pacific Command) theater," Farris said in a statement.

Balance Piston is one of the Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) exercises that the US Special Operations has conducted with the Armed Forces of the Philippines since the 1980s, he said.

The JCET events aim "to improve the interoperability between the US and AFP forces, increase the tactical proficiency of host-nation military elements, and enhance the operational capability of US Special Operations forces," Farris said.

He said the exercises "focus on tactical level tasks ranging from combined mission-planning skills to field craft and mission execution."

"The Philippines is one of 25 countries that we do JCETs with," he said.

On Monday, members of the 17th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) and 353rd Maintenance Squadron (MXS) of the US Air Force Special Operations Command based in Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan, began the "Friendship Jump" at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport.

The 17th SOS saw action in the Formosa (Taiwan) and Vietnam wars, and played defense roles for Cambodia and Lima sites in Laos.

The 353rd MXS, which used to be based in Clark, maintains MC-130H Combat Talon, MC-130P Combat Shadow and C-130 Hercules aircraft for unconventional warfare and special operations.

"What we have is an opportunity to work in a geographically and culturally diverse environment where we are not working in every day," Farris said.

Joma rejects peace offer

From page A1

said. "If they do not want it, we cannot do anything ... We cannot allow ourselves to be dictated upon by these rebels."

Echoing Sison's line, CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said the CPP was rejecting the government peace offer because "it's not a peace agreement but a surrender agreement."

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said the draft accord would involve negotiations in which the NPA would be asked to "go back to the mainstream and lay down their arms."

Golez was unfazed by Rosal's rejection of the draft, which has yet to be presented to the NDF negotiating panel.

"He has not seen it yet. How can he (Rosal) reject something he has not seen?" asked Golez.

Rosal laid down three tough conditions for the guerrillas to return to the negotiating table: a halt to military offensives that allegedly hurt civilians, recognition of past agreements, including a human rights accord, and a stop to the government's labeling of the insurgents as terrorists.

Ceasefire

Malacañang said it was willing to declare a ceasefire with communist rebels if only to make conditions conducive for the resumption of peace negotiations.

"That is the suggestion of the peace panel and we believe the suggestion is very well taken," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a briefing.

Bunye was commenting on a statement made over the radio yesterday morning by Bello, who said his panel was unanimous in its position that a truce may have to be declared.

Bello said that a ceasefire would provide the appropriate climate for the resumption of talks that have been suspended since June 2001 after NPA rebels assassinated former Representatives Rodolfo Aguinaldo and Marcial Punzalan.

Bello said the panel would recommend the declaration of a ceasefire to the President.

Commenting on the communist rebels' rejection of the government's offer of a final accord, Bunye said: "This just shows that they are not really after peace."

"We have gone through great lengths to formulating a comprehensive peace agreement and it's really up to the other side to respond," Bunye said.

Human rights

But Sison said "the national council of the NDF can consider several grounds for declaring its indefinite suspension of the peace negotiations with the Philippine government."

Citing reports by Philippine human rights organizations and Amnesty International, Sison said that from January 2001 to January 2003, there were 172 victims of summary execution, political assassination and massacre; 127 victims of torture; and 879 victims of arbitrary arrest and detention.

He also mentioned that 5,418 were victims of illegal search, 4,043 victims of coercion, 9,219 victims of bombing and strafing, 19,917 victims of harassment, 11,179 people whose property were destroyed, 8,638 victims of divestment of property and 17,564 victims of forced evacuation.

"Ms Macapagal-Arroyo has covered up and condoned all these human rights violations under her policy of state terrorism. She decks herself out as someone innocent of terrorism and as a champion of anti-terrorism whenever the NPA carries out a tactical offensive against notorious criminals and human rights violators," he said.

"Thus, after the punishment of Romulo Kintanar by the NPA, she and her minions are talking and acting in ways prejudicial to the resumption of the peace negotiations," Sison added.

"The regime has acted as a shameless puppet by yielding to the US and other foreign governments jurisdiction over the revolutionary actions of Filipinos in the Philippines and by allowing the US to misrepresent as acts of terrorism those acts that the GRP itself categorizes in its own penal code as rebellion," he said.

The United States and the European Union have labeled the CPP a foreign terrorist organization, allowing them to freeze the assets of the organization.

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople said the Philippines would not ask the EU to remove the CPP and the NPA from its list of foreign terrorist organizations.

"There has been no fundamental change in circumstances since I was last in Europe with regard to Mr. Sison and the NPA as terrorists," Ople said in a statement from Brussels.

Reyes said the communists should be the ones to be blamed for the continued delay of the talks, pointing out that the talks have dragged on for more than 10 years.

The communists, he said, continued with their attacks despite the talks and do not really want to end the talks.

One problem is that the communists do not want to recognize the Philippine Constitution.

"(It is not possible) to talk to people who do not recognize our Constitution. If they do not want to accept our Constitution, it's difficult to continue talking with them," Reyes said. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Norman Bordadora, Alcuin Papa and INQUIRER wires*

Red leaders afraid Rolly knew too much

From page A1

that these activities were (or still are) part of CPP policy and not just a manifestation of Kintanar's adventurism.

If CPP leaders had indeed been aghast and appalled by the kidnapping of businessman Noboyuki Wakaoji in 1986, why did they not speak out then? Why didn't they remove Kintanar then? And what has the CPP-NPA to say about its wholesale extortion during elections through so-called "permits-to-campaign"?

The claim that Kintanar was conniving with the military and police in counterinsurgency operations is speculative. The CPP has not presented any evidence. Same with the so-called assassination plot on CPP founding chair Jose Ma. Sison.

Besides, if Kintanar had really wanted to hit the CPP-NPA, he would not have done so through "surveillance operations, psy-ops and sabotage operations and attacking and attempting to destroy NPA units and guerrilla zones" as claimed, but through other means, as will soon be illustrated.

Kintanar has also been held as one of those responsible for the anti-infiltration purge in Mindanao in 1985-86 that claimed the lives of hundreds of cadres suspected of being government spies. The charge is false—Kintanar had left Mindanao more than a year before the purge.

International links

If it wasn't for criminal and counterinsurgency activities, why then did the CPP have Kintanar killed?

For one, he knew too much.

Kintanar was at the helm of the NPA at a time when the CPP-NPA was at its peak. The CPP's Maoist precepts dictated that to achieve revolutionary victory, the CPP-NPA had to move from guerrilla warfare to regular warfare.

Thus, Kintanar boldly embarked on "regularization," building larger NPA formations and launching bigger "tactical offensives." Soon enough, however, Kintanar realized that regular warfare required a steady stream of arms and ammunition. This meant that the CPP-NPA would somehow have to find a reliable and stable arms source and also a way of getting the arms into the country.

China, too busy building "market socialism" (read: capitalism), was no longer willing to export revolution as before. (In the early 1970s, the CPP had botched two attempts at procuring arms from China.) Thus, in the latter half of the 1980s and in the early 1990s, Kintanar and his deputies traveled to various parts of the globe, searching for possible sources of arms.

Using Yugoslavia as their international base, Kintnar and his group linked up with many revolutionary or "anti-imperialist" governments (like Libya, North Korea and Iraq) and movements (like the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Sandinistas and even the Japanese Red Army). Kintanar and company were able to secure promises of arms but they were never able to solve the problem of smuggling the arms into the Philippines.

One of the "anti-imperialist" governments with which Kintanar and his group developed close ties provided them with hard-to-detect counterfeit US dollars. The NPA widely used these fake dollars in both its international and domestic operations in the late 1980s. The fake dollar racket was busted in 1990, forcing the CPP-NPA to close certain accounts in international banks.

On the defensive

The tagging of the CPP-NPA as a "terrorist organization" by the Philippines and Western governments has been very much in the news lately. The US Central Intelligence Agency, Interpol, other Western intelligence agencies and the Philippine military intelligence service are all well aware of the CPP-NPA's connections and activities, but they have never been able to convincingly prove its being a "terrorist" organization before a court of law.

Nonetheless, the CPP-NPA has been put on the political defensive. Note all the outcry against its being labeled "terrorist."

In a cheap and desperate bid to show that it is a respectable organization, the CPP-NPA is now trying to pin the blame on Kintanar for actions that could be deemed "terrorist" or "criminal"—kidnappings, fake dollars, etc.—and claiming that these were undertaken without the CPP leadership's authorization. Kintanar has become a convenient— and silenced—scapegoat.

When US military advisor Col. James Rowe was ambushed and killed by NPA gunmen in 1989, CPP leaders were all in ecstasy. Now, however, Sison, apparently fearful of being extradited or spirited away to the United States or Guantanamo, has issued a statement, crying: Kintanar's to blame, not me.

As a seasoned and shrewd politico-military cadre, Kintanar knew only too well that the CPP-NPA could not be defeated simply through military means. Assisting the military in such efforts as surveillance and attacking NPA units would not have had much effect.

It was in the political sphere that the CPP-NPA was most vulnerable.

Had he wanted to, Kintanar could very well have spilled the beans—publicly—on the CPP-NPA's linkages with governments allegedly promoting or coddling "terrorism" (especially those in Bush's "Axis of Evil") and with movements still considered "terrorist" like the JRA; on the counterfeit dollars; or on NPA "special operations."

As a former member of the CPP Politburo, Kintanar also had access to inside information on the party's discussions and assessments of the anti-infiltration purges not just in Mindanao but also in Southern Tagalog, Metro Manila, Northern Luzon in the 1980s.

And, of course, access too to information regarding the Plaza Miranda bombing of 1971. His personal testimony as former NPA leader and former CPP Politburo member on any of these activities would have been damning to the CPP-NPA.

Kintanar did not tattle. In fact, perhaps out of his faithfulness to the revolutionary cause, he had expressly advised those who remained loyal or friendly to him to keep mum. He did not want to risk the revolutionary movement, or the Left in general, being put in too negative a light.

If he wasn't talking, why would the CPP still do him in then? Well, there was always the possibility that he would talk someday.

He dared to oppose

But there is another factor to consider, a deeper reason. It has to do with the very frame of mind of at least some people in the CPP leadership.

Kintanar was killed because, at certain period at least, he dared to oppose.

In 1986, for instance, there was a Politburo discussion on who should replace the newly resigned Rodolfo Salas as party chair.

Kintanar, newly promoted to the Politburo, pushed for an internal party investigation of the Plaza Miranda bombing. He was overruled, however. (Back in 1972, Kintanar was present when Danny Cordero, an able NPA commander, made an astounding confession just before he was executed by the party for insubordination: That he had lobbed the grenades at Plaza Miranda in 1971 and that Sison himself had ordered the bombing.)

The differences between Sison and Kintanar widened. In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, Kintanar resisted efforts of pro-Sison forces to break up large NPA formations. In Europe, Sison also tried to wrest command of the NPA's international machinery. But Kintanar's operatives still basically followed the orders of their NPA chief.

In 1992-93, the internal party struggle spilled out into the open when Sison faxed press statements from Utrecht, accusing Kintanar and two other Politburo members of being "renegades," "enemy agents" and "gangsters."

In turn, the three lambasted Sison for being a "dictator" and for being "Stalinist" and "dogmatist." A few months later, the CPP announced to the media that Kintanar, Filemon Lagman and other "rejectionist" leaders would be tried by "people's courts" and meted out death sentences.

After his expulsion from the CPP, Kintanar gradually drew away from the intense polemics and character assassinations that continued between the "reaffirmists" and "rejectionists." These were not his cup of tea. He pursued his new life as a security consultant for various government agencies, which involved mainly going after criminal syndicates.

He maintained links with old comrades, but these were largely of a social nature. He did give advice to those still politically active when they sought him out.

With Kintanar out of revolutionary politics, why couldn't the CPP let him be? For the powers that be in the CPP, however, expulsion was not enough.

Kintanar must have had the prescience—but apparently not did not take precaution—in his abhorrence of Stalinists. Even when he was already the absolute ruler of the Soviet Union, the megalomaniac Stalin did not stop at expelling dissenters from the Communist Party. He put them to death, whether they remained politically active or not.

It is all so clear now that within the CPP, there are leading members of the same mold. They brook no opposition, no challenge, no criticism. They view those who oppose them as being counterrevolutionaries, renegades, and enemies of the people.

Kintanar? How dare he oppose! How dare he challenge and defy! How dare he put to public scorn the party leadership to public scorn! The Party—the vanguard of the Philippine proletariat! NPA chief at that!

Doddering target

The vindictiveness, viciousness and long memories of at least a number of those in the CPP leadership should not be underestimated. I distinctly remember an account narrated to me by Charlie (pseudonym), one of Kintanar's closest deputies.

Sometime in the mid-80s, the NPA General Command received from the CPP leadership an "order of battle," i.e., a list of persons to be executed. The list, the GC was told, had originated from prison.

One of the names near the top of the list was an unfamiliar one. When the GC asked for clarification, they were told that the person concerned was a "Lavaite" (one belonging to the pro-Soviet Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas, from which Sison and company had broken away before reestablishing the CPP along the Maoist line in 1968).

In preparation for the kill, the GC sent an operative to Central Luzon to check the "Lavaite's" whereabouts. That proved easy. Neighbors simply pointed to his house, and said, "That's him, in the yard."

The operative drew near but soon stopped dead in his tracks. He was shocked to find an old man, sweeping fallen leaves, doing so very slowly. Reporting back to the GC, he asked, "Why him? He's so old. *Uugod-ugod na!* (Already doddering!)" Kintanar and company quietly "demoted" the old man to the bottom of the list, thereby saving him from the gunman.

When the story was told to me, I recalled something I had read some time ago—that the intense ideological struggle of the young Maoists in the PKP with the "Lavaite" leadership had been in the 1960s. This meant that someone or some persons in the CPP leadership had not forgotten—or forgiven—those who had opposed and criticized them even after twenty years!

The former NPA chief was tried in absentia by a kangaroo or possibly even fictitious "people's court" purportedly in 1993. Kintanar's executioners certainly took their time in meting out the death sentence, but they did not have to wait for Kintanar to get to be an old, doddering man.

If the perpetrators, especially the mastermind, of the Kintanar murder are not apprehended and punished, then the foremost question now can only be: Who's next in the order of battle?

More blood to flow, says Ka Roger

From page A1

ple, such as kidnapping, bank robberies, absconding with CPP funds, and plotting to kill the party's founding chair Jose. Ma. Sison.

Ma. Gloria "Joy" Asuncion-Kintanar has described the charges against her slain husband as "all lies." On Sunday, she appealed to Sison to "stop playing God."

Rosal congratulated members of the NPA "special unit" that meted out the CPP's death sentence to Kintanar. "They all deserve a big pat on the back for a job well done," he said.

Kintanar was assassinated by two persons inside a restaurant in Quezon City on Jan. 24. He and several former top CPP cadres, called the "rejectionists," were expelled from the party by a "reaffirmist" pro-Sison faction in the early 1990s following a bitter power struggle.

Instead of killing each other, leaders of the Left should resolve ideological and political differences through "open, honest rigorous and edifying discussion, dialogue and debate," a group of veterans of the First Quarter Storm (FQS) said.

In a statement, Loretta Ann Rosales, chair of the FQS Foundation, appealed to "other armed Left groups" to approach the situation with "largeness of mind and to express restraint and prudence in collective behavior so as to avoid fratricidal violence while contributing in bringing about a just solution to Rolly's murder."

Revenge

Asked about a supposed plan by Kintanar's followers to exact revenge, Rosal let out a big laugh. He later turned serious.

"This bunch of traitors already knew long before who would be next," he said in a cellular phone interview. He did not elaborate.

Rosal said those who might attack any CPP-NPA member would be Kintanar's "former handlers in the military and the police."

"They are trying to cover up for the loss of Kintanar whom they fully believed was impenetrable. Acting as consultant for several government agencies was only a front for Kintanar. He was actually an asset for the AFP-PNP anti-insurgency program. He's a revolutionary who turned traitor to the revolution," Rosal said.

Rosal pointed out that Kintanar's supposed followers and Arturo Tabara's "group of traitors" knew that what had transpired was "the party's implementation of our revolutionary brand of justice."

Tabara is an official of the Revolutionary Proletariat Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), which broke away from the CPP. The RPA-ABB has initiated peace talks with the government.

The CPP spokesperson scoffed at Kintanar widow's appeal for CPP leaders not to "play God."

"As a former member of the movement, she's very much aware of the concept of revolutionary justice. What befell Kintanar was the kind of justice fitted for traitors like him," Rosal said.

Not millionaires

Belying the CPP's accusation that her husband had pocketed P30 million in party funds, Joy said: "We are not millionaires."

She also denied Rosal's allegations that her husband had been involved in the 1986 kidnapping of Japanese businessman Noboyuki Wakaoji and the 1989 abduction of Bombo Radyo Philippines president Rogelio Florete.

On Sunday, Rosal alleged that Florete's family paid P15 million in ransom to the former NPA chief, and that Kintanar and his men were paid $10 million in exchange for Wakaoji's release.

Joy said her family did not have the millions as claimed by Rosal. She said her family did not own a house and was staying in her mother's house in Quezon City.

"Of course now, we've worked for the past 10 years. We were able to set up a small business through the help of friends because Rolly was such a good man. He has helped a lot of people so in return, these people helped him by way of giving him business opportunities," she said.

She said the income derived from a security agency was supporting their daily needs.

On her husband's alleged involvement in the Nida Blanca murder case, Joy said the principal suspect, Philip Medel, had approached her husband because Medel knew that Rolly was the security consultant of the Bureau of Immigration.

Joy admitted that she and her husband already knew that he was on the order of battle of the CPP-NPA.

She said her husband had been security conscious, always bringing with him his firearm. But on that fateful day, she said her husband had his gun inside his bag when the NPA assassins struck.

The congressman-uncle of Kintanar yesterday bewailed his killing in a speech at the House of Representatives.

"It is really ironic that when Ka Rolly was engaged in actual battle with the forces of martial law, his life was spared and when he was working to bring about peace, he was brutally killed," said Cebu Rep. Simeon Kintanar, first cousin of Kintanar's father.

Bayan alarmed

In Naga City, the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and party-list group Bayan Muna yesterday raised alarm over presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye's statement that the campaign against the CPP-NPA include "front organizations" and "militant cells."

Eric Torrecampo, Bayan Muna coordinator in Camarines Sur, said the remarks precluded attacks on militant organizations like his in the wake of Kintanar's assassination and had the trimmings of the same "all-out war" policy of the Macapagal administration carried out against members of the groups.

"We cannot be cowed with such threats because we are different from the NPA and we are a duly registered group working within the legal framework," Torrecampo said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Juliet L. Javellana; Juan Escandor Jr. and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

People with cancer discover hope in spirituality

From page A1

Philippines Complex on Jan. 18.

The event, which is part of the National Cancer Consciousness Campaign, was the first gathering of its kind. It was organized by Filipino oncologists led by Dr. Valorie Fullon Chan, and had spirituality as its theme.

Represented were cancer support groups, such as the Philippine Cancer Society, Aruga, Khyte, I Can Serve, Can Survive and Can Share. Leaders from different religious groups joined them in prayers of perseverance and courage.

Prayers and socialization with other cancer survivors promote the psychosocial health of people with cancer, Rosario said.

Exposing the children of Munting Paraiso to activities like the prayer rally makes them realize that there's more to life than being sick, she added.

Contagious strength

Broadcast journalist Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala of I Can Serve, who has been free of breast cancer for five years, told the gathering that "the strength given by God to each cancer survivor is contagious." This is why her favorite companions are cancer survivors.

"When you're with cancer survivors, you'll have hope because they will encourage you and give you hope. Keep praying, keep believing. Sometimes complete recovery is not always the answer. We have to look beyond the illness ... The only reason for us being here is to love and to serve," she said.

Alikpala said that five years ago, her doctor had told her that she would not have a baby. A year and a half ago, she bore one.

"The baby is normal and happy. She is my miracle baby. Her name's Ariana," she said.

She believes Mariana Eugenie is a gift, another source of hope.

Offering to God

Francine Go embraced her suffering from breast cancer as part of her offering to God. She underwent a mastectomy in July 2001, and has been in remission since.

"I look at it for its redemptive value in helping other people rise above their pains and become an inspiration for them to fight the illness in order to survive," Go said.

She is a doting mother, loving wife, member of a healing ministry, and core member of Can Share, a cancer support group of the UST Hospital Apostolate.

She visits the sick, the dying, street children and prisoners.

"Can Share became an opportunity for me to grow in faith. As I learned to let go and (instead serve the Lord), miracles happened one after another. My healing progressed and I became an inspiration to the depressed and the sick," she said.

Children patients

For children suffering from cancer, and also for their families, prayer is a calming, reassuring ritual that cushions one from the harsh realities of chemotherapy.

Joshua de los Santos, 6, was diagnosed with Burkitts lymphoma two years ago. He has been in remission for a year now. He is done with chemotherapy, and it has been a year since he took medications.

Cancer seems to be a thing of the past for the boy, although he has to go back to the doctor for CT scans and checkups every three months.

Joshua says prayers have helped in his recovery. "*Sana tuloy tuloy na ang paggaling ko* (I hope I recover completely)," he said.

Jerick de Guzman, 8, has leukemia. He prays that "Papa God" also cure him, just like what He did to his friend Joshua.

Jerick calls out to "Papa God" each time he has chemotherapy. Each session leaves him nauseated and suffering from head and body aches.

He had to stop going to school to concentrate on his treatment.

Darwin Caluntag, 8, was discovered to have leukemia in May 2002. He prays not only for God to take away his disease but also for his father to return home.

His mother said her husband left them even while Darwin was in pain from the disease. She said he wouldn't even donate blood when Darwin needed it or would he visit him or give money for his medicines and treatment.

Despite the hardships of the disease and the chemotherapy sessions, Darwin still manages to go to school. He attends the Soldiers Hills School in Muntinlupa City where he is in Grade 2.

His advice to children who are sick: "They should be more active, pray more and eat more vegetables and carrots."

Family prayer

In 1995, Conrado "Dodi" Limcaoco was discovered to have liver cancer and deemed inoperable by many doctors. He had a 10-cm bipolar tumor—both lobes of his liver were consumed by cancer.

His family rallied around him; they prayed the rosary every night.

Dodi looked for a surgeon who was willing to risk operating on him. He found two, and they both agreed Dodi had nothing to lose. He had surgery in December 1995 where two-thirds of his liver was removed.

That he survived the operation was a miracle in itself. Yet his "days of wonders" didn't end there.

"A week later they took a test and my liver was back. The liver regenerates, but not in a week. And not that large," he said.

For a year, Limcaoco had chemotherapy, although he was hesitant at first. "There was already a miracle, so why the need for chemotherapy?" he asked then.

He also had acupuncture, which helped him deal with the pain and which strengthened his immune system.

He said his case had called for a combination of prayer and spiritual intervention, and traditional and alternative medicine, all working in concert "with God as the conductor."

Limcaoco's cancer has been in remission for seven years now. Now, he is President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on media and religious affairs.

Steadfast in belief

One thing was clear during the Jan. 18 prayer rally. Cancer survivors and those who still had the disease had one thing in common. They remained steadfast in their belief in God and miracles.

Rio Diaz-Cojuangco, who had a remission but whose cancer has returned, told the audience: "I don't know what the future holds for me but I know who holds the future and He has promised He will never leave me nor forsake me. To God be the Glory." *(To be concluded tomorrow)*

Here a moo ...

From page A1

lab and adopted by the dairy industry, offered "substantial economic gains."

It could be widened to "tailor" milk for human consumption, they add.

ntil now, scientists have genetically modified and cloned farm animals for medical research.

By inserting specific genes in a sheep, for instance, they can produce a valuable protein in its milk which can then be harvested for new drugs.

Or by producing pigs with specifically deleted genes, they may gain tissues for human organ transplants that face less risk of rejection by the patient's immune system.

Some pedigree animals have been genetically duplicated for commercial reasons—research companies hope to sell the clones of livestock that, for instance, are champion producers of milk.

Human consumption

But this is the first case in which a cow has been both genetically engineered and cloned to produce an altered milk for human consumption, rather than for medical research.

Laible's team did this by inserting into a bovine cell two additional genes responsible for two casein proteins, beta and kappa.

The modified cell was then fused with an egg whose core had been removed—the standard technique in cloning—and the resulting embryo implanted into a cow uterus.

Out of 126 transgenic, cloned embryos, just 11 (9 percent) survived to become healthy, viable calves.

That was even lower than the 20-percent success rate among nontransgenic cloning, whose toll reflects the many risks from genetic duplication.

After weaning, the cows were given hormones to induce lactation, and nine of them produced milk with 8 to 20 percent more beta casein and up to a twofold increase in kappa casein compared with normal cows.

Two other cows produced one protein but not both.

Safe?

Whether or not food from cloned animals is safe for humans is being considered by many countries, including Britain and the United States.

Governments are treading gingerly, given the angry debate triggered by the the first generation of food that emerged from biotech labs. These are genetically modified plants, such as corn and wheat, that have had foreign genes slotted into them to, for instance boost their resistance to pests.

Farmers in North America have enthusiastically embraced these crops because they offer big cost savings, and scientists generally agree that they see no evidence so far of a threat to health or the environment. AFP

IN YESTERDAY'S story "PDI readers bring miracle to Nicole," we identified in the accompanying photo Justin Figueroa as Nicole. Our photo caption should have read—"Dr. Francis Lopez tends to Justin Figueroa, Nicole's donor." Our apologies.

TAKE TWO

The erratum that appeared on Page A20 of our Jan. 27 issue should have read: "The man seated between Romulo Kintanar and President Macapagal is Jerry Acuzar of San Jose Builders. They were discussing livelihood and housing projects for rebel returnees." The caption of the same photo that appeared on Page A15 of our Jan. 25 issue erroneously identified the man in the middle as Rodolfo Salas. It was Salas—not Chief Supt. Roberto Delfin—whom we mistook for Acuzar. Again, our apologies.

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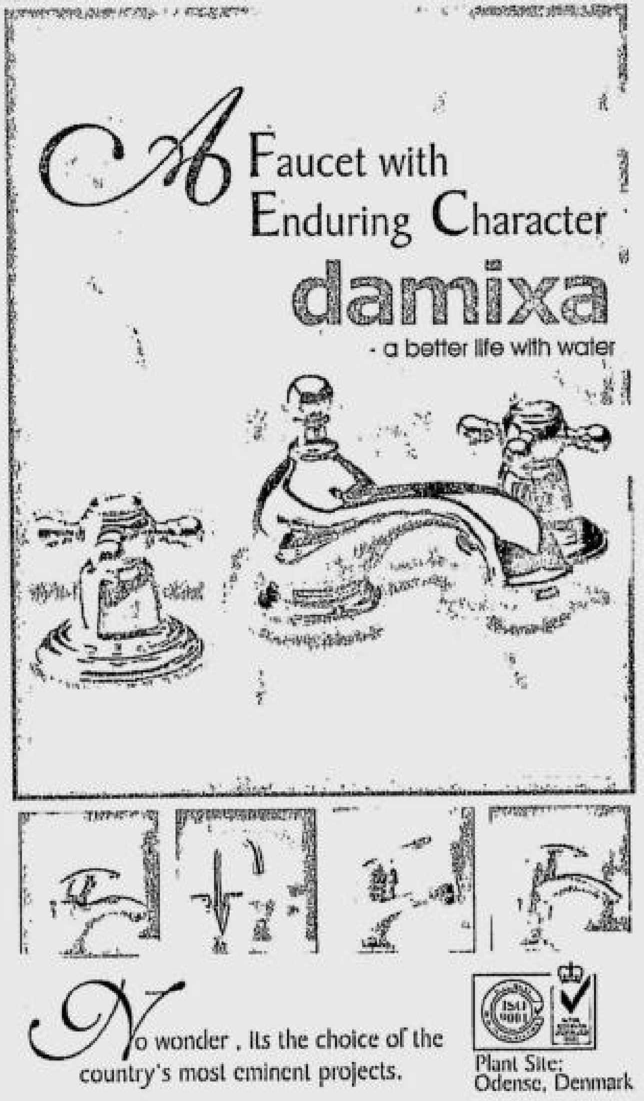

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Duncan vs Garnett in Solar NBA today

THE TWO starting forwards for the West in next month's NBA All-Star Game, Tim Duncan and Kevin Garnett, go head-to-head today when the San Antonio Spurs take on the Minnesota Timberwolves at 9 a.m. on Solar Sports, with a replay at 8 p.m. Duncan, the NBA's reigning MVP, has been dominating the NBA anew. Garnett leads his team in points (21.6), rebounds (12.9) and assists (5.7) for the season. He has steered Minnesota to seven wins in their last eight games, including five straight.

FROM LAUGHINGSTOCK TO CHAMPION

Buccaneers bag Super Bowl crown

By Rebecca Bryan
AFP Sports Writer

SAN DIEGO, California—The Tampa Bay Buccaneers completed their odyssey from National Football League laughingstock to champion Sunday with a 48-21 victory over the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl 37.

The Buccaneers, playing in the NFL title game for the first time in their 27-year history, used the league's leading defense to stymie Oakland's top-rated offense in the first such match-up in Super Bowl history.

"Offense wins games. Defense wins championships," grinned Tampa Bay defensive end Simeon Rice, who accounted for two sacks of Raiders quarterback Rich Gannon..

Pressure

Gannon, the NFL Most Valuable Player, was intercepted a Super Bowl-record five times and sacked five times while Tampa Bay's defensive scheme smothered future Hall of Fame receivers Jerry Rice and Tim Brown.

"They couldn't get on a roll because they couldn't stand the pressure," Simeon Rice said. "When you can't stand the pressure, you've got to get out of the kitchen. We put the pressure we needed to put on their offense and they weren't prepared for what this defense brings."

"This is a great defensive team," said Bucs coach Jon Gruden, who jumped from the Raiders last February and at 39 became the youngest coach to guide a team to a Super Bowl crown. "Against the forward pass they say, 'Bring it on.'"

Running game

By the time Gannon was able to unleash his arm in the second half, Brad Johnson and the Buccaneers had found their feet, supplementing their passing attack with an effective running game to lead 20-3 at halftime.

On Tampa Bay's first possession of the third quarter, Johnson engineered a textbook drive, completing five of six passes and running for 10 yards, finally completing an eight-yard touchdown pass to Keenan McCardell. Argentina's Martin Gramatica kicked the extra point to make it 27-3.

"That first possession of the third quarter was an incredible drive," said Johnson, who completed 18-of-34 passes for 215 yards and two touchdowns.

"To go 90 yards and score a touchdown, that doesn't happen very often in the Super Bowl."

Momentum

The Bucs immediately stretched their lead to 34-3 when Dwight Smith intercepted Gannon's pass intended for Jerry Rice and ran 44 yards for a touchdown.

But Oakland weren't done. The Raiders scored their first touchdown in the third quarter as Gannon finally found a little room. Jerry Rice made his first reception of the game in the 82-yard drive, which ended with a 39-yard touchdown pass to Jerry Porter.

The Raiders gained some momentum early in the fourth when Eric Johnson scooped up a blocked punt and scored a touchdown. Again a Raiders' two-point try failed, to leave them trailing 34-15.

Oakland kept things interesting as Gannon connected with Jerry Rice for a touchdown with 6:06 remaining.

"We just told ourselves to keep pounding the rock," said Tampa Bay's Derrick Brooks, the NFL Defensive Player of the Year. "If they don't score any more, we are going to win. We let them score a couple of more times, but this defense just kept bringing it and bringing it." Brooks himself settled the matter with less than two minutes to play, intercepting Gannon and running 44 yards for a touchdown to swell the Bucs' lead to 20.

Extra point

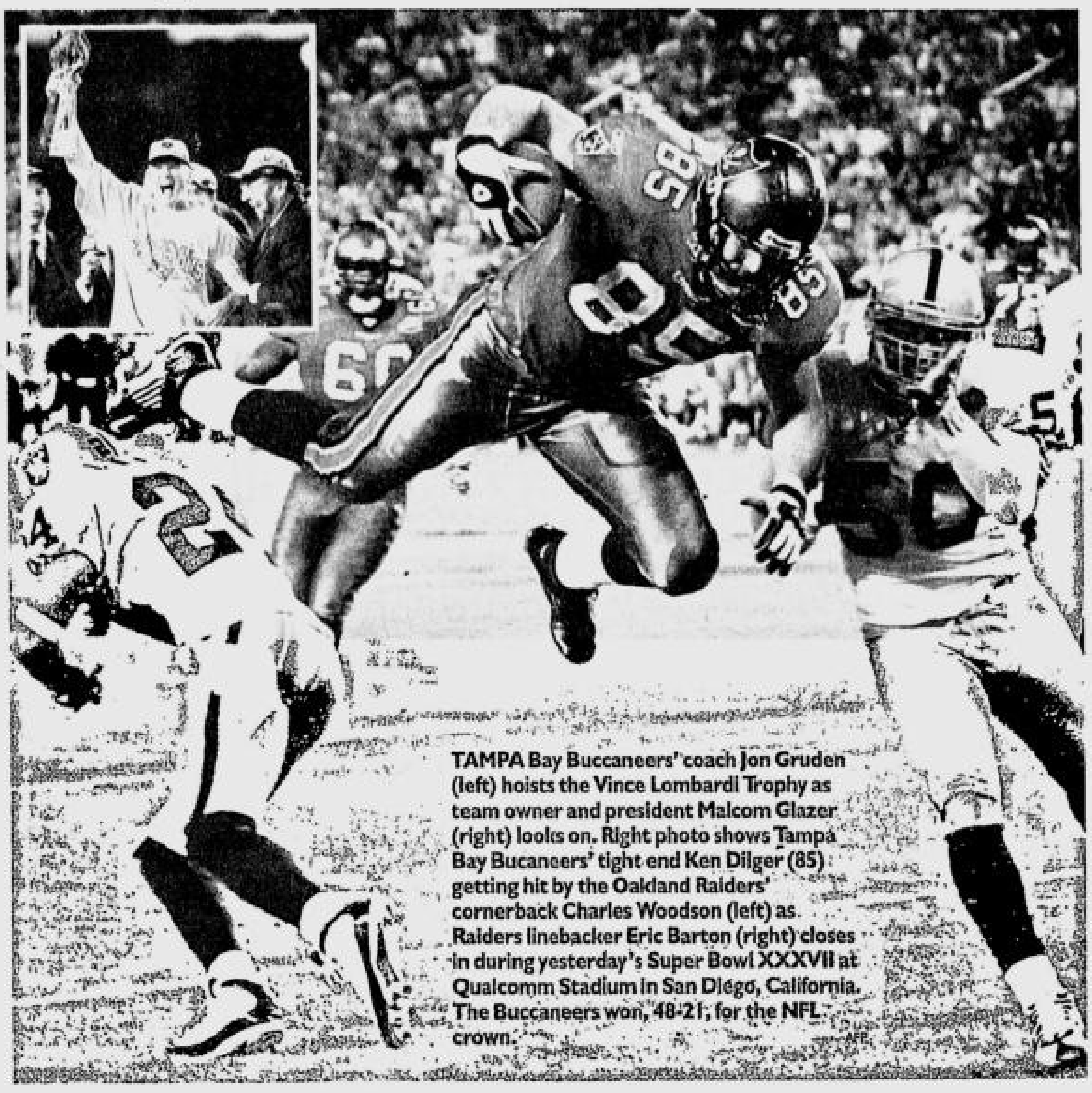
Fittingly, Smith then picked off Gannon again with seconds left and ran 50 yards for another touchdown. Gramatica, who finished with 12 points, nailed the extra point to make the final score 48-21.

Smith became the first player in Super Bowl history to bring back two interceptions for touchdowns in the same game.

Safety Dexter Jackson, who set the tone for Tampa Bay in the first half with two interceptions on consecutive possessions, was named the game's Most Valuable Player.

After their defense set them up on the Tampa Bay 36 following an interception by cornerback Charles Woodson at the start of the game, the Raiders managed just a 40-yard field goal by Sebastian Janikowski.

The Raiders then had to punt four times and had two turnovers in their next seven possessions of the opening half, which they ended with just three first downs and 62 yards as the Bucs offense totaled 198 yards.



TAMPA Bay Buccaneers' coach Jon Gruden (left) hoists the Vince Lombardi Trophy as team owner and president Malcom Glazer (right) looks on. Right photo shows Tampa Bay Bucaneers' tight end Ken Dilger (85) getting hit by the Oakland Raiders' cornerback Charles Woodson (left) as Raiders linebacker Eric Barton (right) closes in during yesterday's Super Bowl XXXVII at Qualcomm Stadium in San Diego, California. The Buccaneers won, 48-21, for the NFL crown. AFP

Bata wins, pockets $15T

EFREN "Bata" Reyes, getting better as he ages, defeated Young Hwa Jeong of Korea, 13-7, in the finals to win the Mid-Atlantic Championship in Chesapeake, Virginia, on Sunday.

Reyes, the leading candidate for the "Greatest 9-Ball Player of All Time" poll being conducted by AZ Billiards, was quiet and humble in victory.

"I was just lucky," he said.

Reyes pocketed US$15,000 for the win while Jeong settled for US$8,000.

The final match went back and forth early with neither player holding a lead of more than one game and the lead going back and forth until the 4-4 mark.

It was then that Reyes made his move and pushed out to a 9-4 lead before scoring the 13-7 victory.

Competitors in the tournament, held at Holiday Inn in Chesapeake, included world billiards big names–Earl Strickland, Corey Deuel, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Mike Immonen and others.

En route to the finals of the double elimination tournament Reyes defeated bosom friend and Puyat Sports teammate Bustamante who in finished 3rd place ($5,000). *ASM*

CHALLENGE CUP

Welcoat completes sweep

By Dennis U. Eroa

ROMEL Adducul saved his best for last and the rest of Welcoat's amazing crew played the game of their lives, posting an escape act over Dazz, 80-71, in overtime and sweeping the PBL Challenge Cup title series last night at the Pasig Sports Center.

The 6-foot-5 Adducul, a flop in the first two games of the series, made sure his final amateur game would be memorable, sinking crucial baskets and hauling big rebounds down the stretch as he authored the Paintmasters' return to glory.

" It wasn't easy as it seemed to be," said triumphant mentor Leo Austria, now proud owner of three PBL titles, two of which came during his time as Shark Energy Drink mentor.

Indeed, the sweep did not come without a gallant fight from the Sparklers, whose lack of killer's instinct told heavily in their bid to end a 6-year title drought.

Welcoat erased a huge 18-point deficit in the third period to win in overtime, 77-68, in Game One at the Quezon Convention Center and barely held on to a 65-63 triumph in Game Two.

Welcoat joined the list of PBL's all-time greats with five titles, all via sweeps. Curiously, four of them were courtesy of now Dazz mentor Junel Baculi.

The celebration started early for the Paintmasters and their supporters, who filled to the rafters the Center. With Adducul and Eddie Laure sinking baskets, Welcoat surged ahead, 57-47, 5:17 remaining. But Dazz was far from finished.

Allan Salangsang buried two triples as the Sparklers shocked the Paintmasters with a mighty 14-0 blast, 61-57, 1:36 remaining but failed to put an exclamation mark when Cyrus Baguio failed to keep his nerves.

It was Adducul, who towered. He made it 59-61 on two free throws, blocked Peter Simon's undergoal stab and capped a sterling night with a difficult shot off John Ferriols to force overtime, 61-61.

As the crowd roared in approval, Adducul scored Welcoat's first four points in extension even as Laure and Ariel Capus made their shots, 70-63, 2:14 remaining.

The Paintmasters could even afford to miss four consecutive free throws and Eugene Tan's twin triples, icing the win when Ronald Tubid and Laure scored, 78-71, 4.5 ticks remaining.

In the battle for third place, Marlon Legaspi and Aris Dimaunahan starred as Blu Detergent clipped LBC, 64-61. Blu lost the first game of the best-of-three series, but rebounded mightily to take the next two outings.

Meanwhile, Adducul was named as MVP of the regular conference. He also shared the finals MVP award with Tubid, hero of Game One.

Adducul's choice, however, surprised jaded observers, who noted that the Tuguegarao, Cagayan, sportsman played second fiddle to Laure and Welcoat's young turks (Paul Artadi, Tubid and Marc Pingris) this conference.

Except in last night's game, Adducul was hardly impressive as he played inconsistently throughout, leaving the 6-foot-3 Laure to take up the cudgels for the Paintmasters.

Mark Cardona of ICTSI-La Salle was named top newcomer with Alex Compton of LBC emerging as sportsmanship awardee. Artadi was most improved player.

SCORES:.

WELCOAT 80—Adducul 21, Laure 15, Tubid 12, Capus 11, Pingris 9, Artadi 8, Cuan 2, Miranda 2, Orfrecio 0.

DAZZ 71—Baguio 18, Ferriols 17, Salangsang 11, Simon 9, Tan 8, Dy 4, Gelig 2, Saquilayan 2, Mercado 0, Dualan 0.

Quarters: 17-13, 33-30, 47-43, 61-61 (reg), 80-71.

Nestea Beach Volley unwraps on Feb. 28

A PLAYER preparing to serve. PDI PHOTO

THE 7th Nestea Beach Volley University Championships, the nation's most popular outdoor summer event, will hold four elimination legs starting this month, followed by the semifinals at the Power Plant at Rockwell Center, Makati City.

This was announced yesterday by Nestea Brand Manager Tina Samaco.

The grand finals will be held in Boracay Island in April.

Samaco said all participating teams will be provided with free travel, food and accommodations.

The schedule: Metro Manila leg, Feb. 28; Luzon leg, March 1-2; Visayas leg, March 13-14; Mindanao leg, March 15; Semifinals, March 16; Finals, April 5-6.

Interested parties may visit the Nestea website at www.nestea.ph or call Corex Bartilet of Rapp Collins, the event organizer, at tel. 633-7429, for other details.

The tournament offers some P500,000 to the winners of both the men's and women's divisions.

Each winning team gets P100,000 plus trophy and the school P50,000 worth of sports equipment and a trophy.

The tournament is open to all college students enrolled for the 2002-2003 school-year, with each school allowed to field in one team each for the men's and women's divisions.

The qualified teams will be selected on a first-come, first-served basis, with 96 slots open nationwide.

Deport them at once–Codiñera

By June Navarro

SUMMARY deportation for Fil-foreign players with incomplete documents.

The PBA players' association yesterday made this urgent call before the Senate committee on youth and sports during the investigation of alleged fake "Fil-fors" in the PBA.

Jerry Codiñera of FedEx, a prime mover of the union's fight against the presence of alleged "Fil-shams" in the league, requested the Senate to automatically deport Fil-fors who lack the supporting documents to prove their citizenship.

"If their papers are incomplete and pose more questions than answers, then it's enough reason to summarily deport them," said Codiñera, a 16-year veteran who spent a greater part of his career playing for Purefoods.

Codiñera voiced out the sentiment of the players' association before Senators Robert Barbers, Robert Jaworski, John Osmeña and Jun Magsaysay.

Also present were PBA Commissioner Noli Eala and representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, Department of Justice, Department of Labor and Employment and the National Statistics Office.

Barbers said the next hearing, to be scheduled next week, will delve on the grilling of Fil-fors whose documents and roots are highly questionable.

Asi Taulava of Talk N' Text and Andy Seigle of Purefoods are on top of the senators' list.

Taulava was present during the two-hour investigation together with Red Bull's Mick Pennisi and Davonn Harp, Alaska's Ali Peek and Rob Duat and San Miguel's Nic Belasco.

The senators grilled the BID allegedly for the immediate approval of recognition papers issued to Fil-foreign players.

Senator Osmeña also scored the Dole for hastily issuing work permits on foreign coaches, pointing out that local coaches are being robbed of coaching opportunities in the PBA.

Dumlao table tennis champ

DAVAO CITY—Rovinick Dumlao of RP Juniors Team B won the premiere boys 17-under division of LG Regional Junior Table Tennis Circuit's 1st leg on Sunday, scoring a 7-11, 11-6, 11-7, 11-6 conquest of Mindanao champion Raymund Francisco at the Victoria Plaza Mall here.

Jan Jan Martinez pocketed the bronze with an 11-4, 11-8, 11-8 win over Vincent Macalam.

In the boys' 14-under, RP Team B's Aaron Morales nipped compatriot Adrian Pablo, 12-10, 6-11, 11-8, 10-12, 13-11, in one of the longest matches in the tournament organized by Councilor Peter Laviña.

Taking the bronze was Mindanao champion Zoren Patrick Mendiola, who pulled off an 11-8, 14-12, 14-16, 11-9 victory over Reymart Pantastico.

Another RP team B bet, Stephanie Taba, ruled the girls' 14-under at the expense of Mindanao champion Jacqueline Carago, 13-11, 11-7, 11-4.

Iligan City's Mercury Paña averted an RP Team B sweep after beating Ayra Malabayabas, 11-6, 8-11, 11-6, 10-12, to bag the girls' 17-under crown.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Olongapo bet gains q'finals

OLONGAPO City bet Leyan Moncera outplayed Rodel Navarro, 7-6, (5), 6-0, yesterday to reach the boys' 16-under quarterfinals of the TMS Ships Agencies Philta Classic at the Villa Gloria Tennis Club outdoor courts in Angeles City.

The 13-year-old Moncera, a freshman at the Regional Science High School in Subic, will face third seed and townmate Nico Riego de Dios.

Moncera, seeded fourth in the 14-under class, defeated Ryan Daza, 6-0, 6-1, to forge a quarterfinal showdown with Ilocos Norte's Patrick Arevalo, a 6-1, 6-3 winner over Ivan Joshua Manalo.

Ateneo's Christian Canlas and Daniel Luis Macalino, and Lourdes School-Mandaluyong's Gerard Michael Ngo also earned quarterfinal berths in this two-weekend event sponsored by Dunlop balls.

The top-ranked Canlas outclassed Paolo Sison, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against Alvin Manalastas, a 6-0, 6-1 winner over Ahul Tayag.

Macalino clobbered Joshua Bacani, 6-2, 6-1, to advance against Daniel Bautista, who scored a 6-1, 6-1 victory over Byran Cura.

Meanwhile, players who wish to enter the boys' and girls' 18-under may register with Jun Castro at Villa Gloria Tennis Club (045-8886449) or at Philta (525-6434).

FIRST MAJOR TOURNEY

DHL-NGAP Amateur Open begins

WHO'LL be the next dominant man in amateur golf?

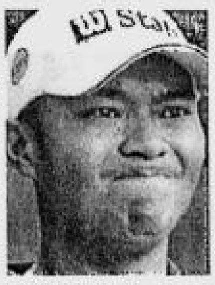
The answer will likely be known when the DHL-NGAP Amateur Open Golf Championship comes off the wraps today at the Canlubang Golf and Country Club's North course with a stellar cast.

Southeast Asian Games champion Juvic Pagunsan and national amateur titlist Jerome Delariarte lead the bidders in this event presented by DHL Worldwide Express and WWW Express, each one a likely candidate to succeed now pro Angelo Que on the throne.

The eighth edition of the DHL Open should help settle that in four days and 72 holes of top-level golf at the Canlubang North course that demands utmost precision and power from the bidders-traits that the next big man in amateur golf should have.

"Philippine amateur golf is looking forward to a big year and the DHL Open should start us off on the right foot," said National Golf Association of the Philippines president and DHL chair Rod Feliciano.

The first major tournament in the amateur golf calendar kicks off at 7:30 a.m. with the ceremonial tee-offs that would have NGAP President and DHL chair Rod Feliciano, DHL International Country Manager Charles Brewer, WWW Express managing director Joe Feliciano, NGAP vice-president Admiral Luisito Fernandez, Canlubang general manager Oscar Papa and WWW Express comptroller Dawn Feliciano doing the honors.


DELARIARTE

Marlon Dizon, last year's champion who also has moved to the pro ranks, and Que will not be around, leaving the stage for Delariarte and Pagunsan to break out the way Que did the past few years.

Delariarte, 24, and Pagunsan are the only remnants of the Philippine team that placed a historic third in the last World Amateurs in Kuala Lumpur.

Out to crowd Pagunsan and Delariarte are RP team members Jay Bayron and Paul Miñoza and the ageless Tommy Manotoc who, to this day, remains a threat in any tournament he plays.

Other prominent contenders are Abe Rosal, Jun Bernis, Juami Rocha, Boyet Saragoza and ex-pro Dave Hernandez and Jonard Rates, who recently rose to prominence by winning the National Caddies Championship at Valley.

The game's Young Turks may also grab the limelight, represented here by former national amateur champion Artemio Murakami, JR Tanpinco, Marvin Dumandan, Erwin Vinluan and Gene Bondoc.

Competition is expected to be as fierce in the women's division, won last year by Carmelette Villaroman, and the senior's event which is being held for the first time.

"The course is in tip top shape and will surely offer a tough and at the same time fair test to our finest amateur golfers," said Cangolf chair Luigi Yulo.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Minnesota vs San Antonio, 9 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), Solar Sports

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Blast, 9:30 a.m., ESPN

NFL Super Bowl Highlights, 10 a.m. (r), ESPN

NFL Superbowl XXXVII - Oakland Raiders vs Tampa Bay Buccaneers, 4 p.m. (r), ESPN

POOL: World Pool League 2002, 1 p.m. (r), ESPN

Rack 'Em Up 2, 1 p.m. (r) and 9 p.m., Star Sports

2002 WPBA Classic Tour, 2 p.m. (r), ESPN

Dumoran forges titular showdown

CEBU—RP Juniors Davis Cup aspirant Oswaldo Dumoran overcame a sluggish start en route to a 4-6, 6-2, 6-2 victory past Tubod, Lanao del Norte's Wilbur Orillano to arrange a boys' 18-under division titular showdown with top seed Janjie Soquino at the 2003 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop here at the Sancase Tennis Club Sunday.

Soquino whipped Flynn Golosinda 6-2, 6-3 in the Milo netfest organized by CTW and supported by Wilson Balls, Adidas and Sports Kids with a Group-3 sanction by the Philippine Tennis Association.

Pucay eyes 3rd straight Gents crown

THE SLIGHT earthquake that hit Cagayan de Oro yesterday did not rouse Mars Pucay from his sound sleep. Truly, no one else can have a better sleep than the pro who has yet to be beaten this year.

All the clubhouse talk is on Pucay and the flaming-hot World Cupper will be aiming for a feat unheard of here in recent memory—win three tournaments in succession—as the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit presented by San Miguel Beer moves on to the Del Monte Golf Club in Bukidnon for the ninth leg starting today.

Back-to-back victories at the Rancho Palos Verdes in Davao and last week's Pueblo del Oro leg have gotten Pucay all fired up and the 32-year-old Mizuno pro is going for a sweep of the Mindanao swing of the circuit also supported by WG&A Super Ferry.

As the new leader of the Order of Merit and fourth different player to hold on to it, Pucay seems bent on giving it all in an unfamiliar territory where Frankie Miñoza started his legendary trail.

Miñoza, who quit after two rounds last week due to a painful wrist, will not be around to join the challenge to Pucay's three-peat ambition due to an earlier commitment he made in Manila.

But his brothers, pros Peter and Raul, and amateurs Paul and Ben, will be around to fight for family pride in the circuit organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines, Inc.

Of the other leg winners who are in the field, nobody is more aching to beat Pucay than Sherwood Hills leg champion Cassius Casas.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Frankie Miñoza scored a 283 total to win the 2nd national PGA championship at the Canlubang north course. Also today in 1996, Cassius Casas fired a 1-under-par 71 to post a two-shot victory in the 4th Epson Golf Classic at the Villamor course.

San Sebastian rips San Beda in 'NC'

SAN Sebastian College clobbered San Beda, 3-0, last Saturday to remain unbeaten after three games in the 78th National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) men's tennis tournament at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The Stags, mentored by former World Youth Cupper Frederick Morgan, displayed their awesome form with Niño Salvador hacking out a 6-2, 6-0 win over Neil Fernandez in the first singles and Salvador teaming up with Arvin Ruel, younger brother of RP Davis Cupper Rolando Ruel, to demolish Borgs Solpico and Fernandez, 6-0, 6-2, in the doubles.

BCC sweeps interclub ladies golf

BAGUIO CITY—Baguio Country Club proved its invincibility at its turf on Saturday, sweeping the three divisions of the 28th Baguio Invitational Interclub ladies golf tournament.

Anne Philips scored 41 points as BCC scored a final round 145 points and ruled Class A with a three-day total of 407. She was supported by Sonia Bruce with a 38 and Beth Dixon and Carla Navarette, who combined for 66 points.

Aguinaldo GC came second with 388 points, including a final round score of 140 built upon the 37 of Rita Horan and the combined 64 of Vicky Arellano and Barbie Cruz.

Villamor placed third with 381 followed by Wack Wack (372), Philippine Navy (364), Baguio Ladies Golf Open Association (351), Forest Hills (339) and Riviera GC (319).

In Class B, Linda Vickers sizzled with 42 points to power BCC past Wack Wack with a 158 and 429 aggregate. Other BCC scorers were Jean Leal with 40, Elizabeth Loy 39, and Liza Smit 37.

Donna Levriza, Sylvia Montemayor and Evelyn Sy combined for 96 points while Aloma Lopez added 30 to give Wack Wack 352 points.

BCC also took the Class C plum with 416 points.

Jungolf sensation and Aguinado ace Matet Salivio, 15, romped off with the individual plum in Class A with 109 points, including a final day 39.

Anthony del Leon, BCC general manager, thanked the participants, sponsors and guests for the successful staging of the tournament.

NBA RESULTS

Toronto 101, Sacramento 97; Boston 91, Orlando 83; Chicago 100, Houston 98; Indiana 108, LA Clippers 101; New York 106, Phoenix 98; Portland 100, Dallas 93. *AFP*

It's Singh

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Fiji's Vijay Singh fired an eight-under par 63, the low score of the final round, to overcome a two-stroke deficit and take a three-stroke triumph Sunday at the $4M PGA Phoenix Open.

Seventh-ranked Singh finished at 23-under par 261 to win $720,000 and his 12th career PGA title, the first since winning last April at Houston. *AFP*

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Dayrit backs Asian trackfest

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit made a surprise appearance in yesterday's launching of the Asian track and field championships and graciously made a pitch for the 44-nation trackfest slated in September.

Setting aside his long-standing quarrel with outspoken athletics chief Go Teng Kok, Dayrit graced the launching along with several top local sports officials, athletes and Asian Athletics Association secretary general Maurice Nicholas.

Manila Sports Council head Ali Atienza also attended on behalf of his father, Mayor Lito Atienza, who will play host to the 1,000 athletes and officials expected to take part in the Sept. 18-23 event at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

International Olympic Committee representatives Frank Elizalde and several other national sports association presidents also rallied behind the meet which the country hosted in 1993 and 1973.

Government and private sectors have started to pool their support to the biggest sporting event the country will host this year which is estimated to cost P30 million.

The Philippine Sports Commission, through commissioners Mike Barredo and Ambrosio de Luna, committed itself to support the Asian championships in keeping with President Arroyo's thrust to promote the country among foreigners.

"I take this as a good sign that the Asian championships will be a huge success not only for Philippine sports but for the whole Filipino nation as well," said Go.

The Philippines, which won a bronze medal through Elma Muros in 1993, is expected to do better this time even against the world superpowers in athletics like China.

Go said the RP long and middle distance runners and long jumpers are at par with the region's best and will give their best shot in front of their countrymen.

Invictus 4-Cock Bigtime derby on

AFICIONADOS return to the Mandaluyong Coliseum today as the "Invictus 4-Cock Bigtime Derby" gets underway with Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Complexor 3000 and Lakpue Drug Inc. as sponsors.

Seeing action in the derby hosted by lawyer Mario Antonio are UCAP stalwarts Raymond Velayo, sabong idol Patrick Antonio, Biboy Enriquez, Jet Fernando, Sonny Lagon, Ram Lopez, Bobby Wong, Mario Villamor, Butch Macasaet, Alan Tan, OPMI president Vic Yu and Alex Tang.

LGBA's bets are LGBA president Boy Diaz, Sandy Javier, Butch Littaua, Tony Galang, Commissioner Jun Sevilla, Blandy Tolentino and Rep. Lawrence Wacnang of Kalinga.

For details, contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 535-2341 and 534-4110.

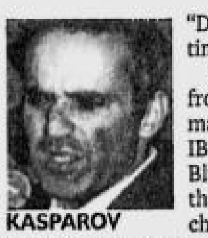
Thunderbird Winning Formula returns

IN response to the requests of cockers nationwide, Thunderbird Power Feeds is bringing back its Thunderbird Winning Formula segment in the Usapang Hayop Portion of the popular radio program "Hataw" hosted by Deo (Lakay) Macalma and Ruth (Pangga) Abao-Espinosa, aired at DZRH 666 AM every morning from Monday to Saturday.

Introducing the new Thunderbird Platinum Hi-Protein Power Pellets, the segment will be aired from Jan. 20 to Feb. 15, between 9:15 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Kasparov beats Deep Junior

NEW YORK—In just 27 moves, chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov on Sunday defeated a computer program said to be more cunning than the one that beat him nearly six years ago.


KASPAROV

The match, the first of six being played in the New York Athletic Club near Central Park, pit Kasparov against an Israeli computer program called "Deep Junior," the computer three-time world champion.

Kasparov, 39, is still smarting from his 1997 defeat in a series of matches in Philadelphia against an IBM supercomputer known as "Deep Blue." A miffed Kasparov charged that human experts helped the machine defeat him, and demanded a rematch. *AFP*

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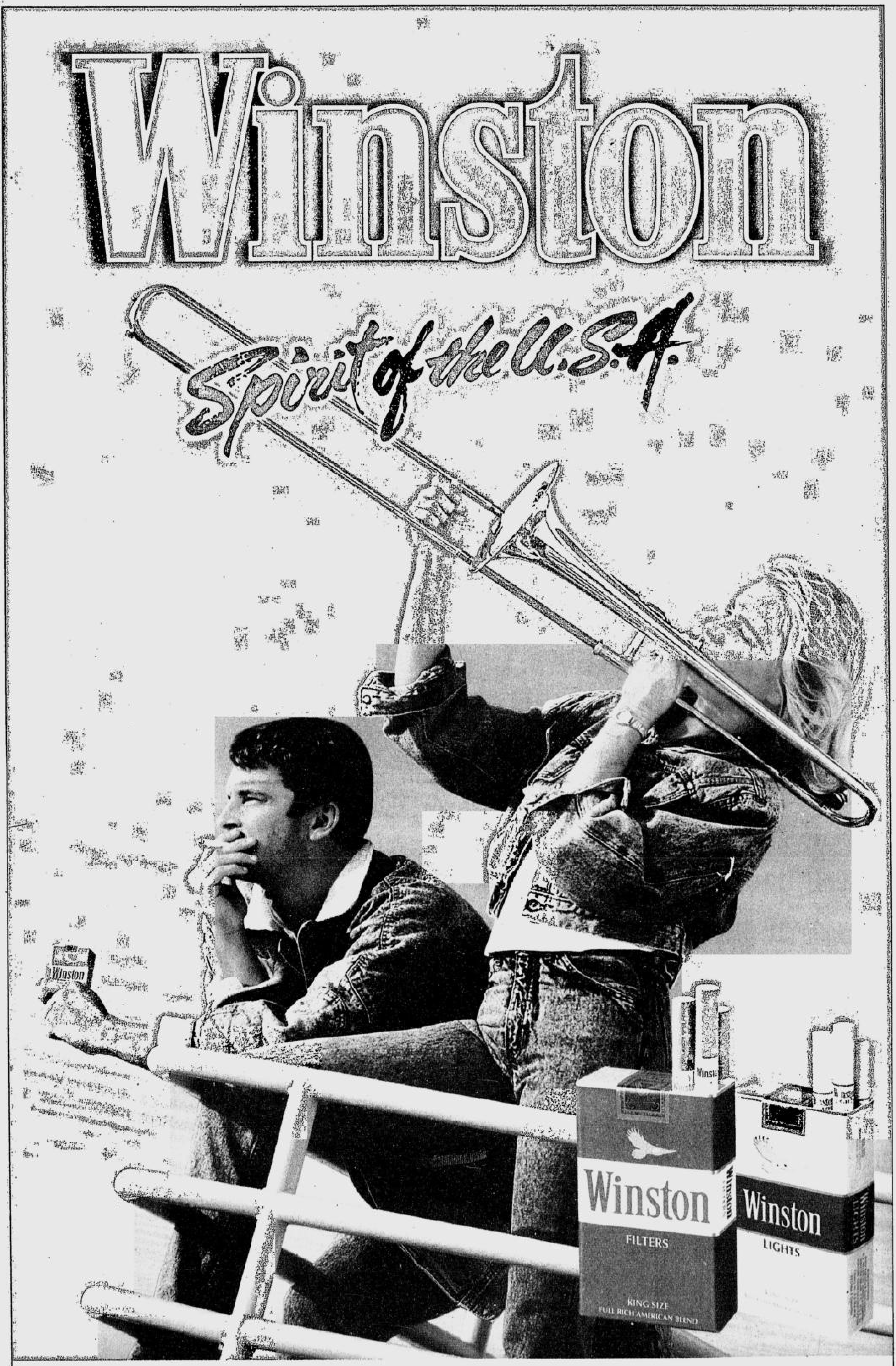
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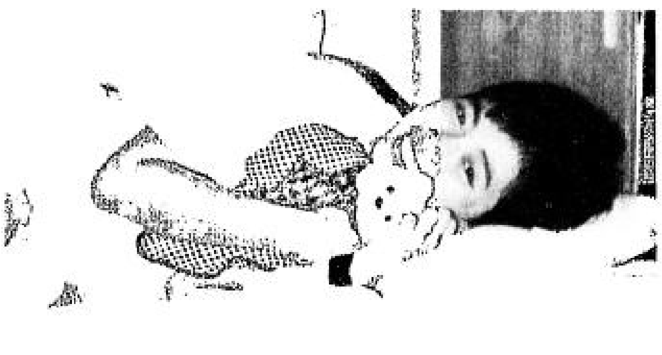

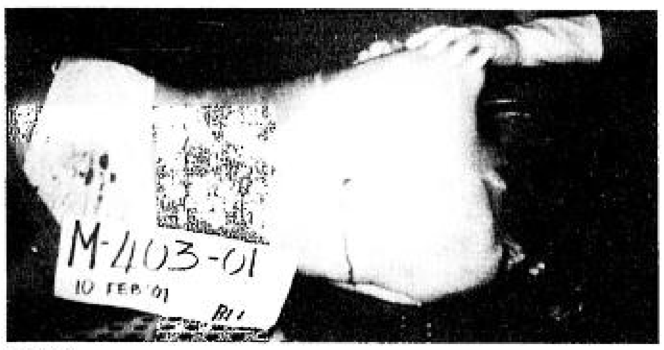

THE family of Army 2nd Lt. Jessica Chavez can only find comfort in each other's presence the day they received news of her death in Feb., 2001 (above). At right, the dreams of Jessica, a woman whose above par intellect won her the admiration of friends and colleagues in the military, turned to ashes when her body was found on Feb. 9, 2001 with a bullet in the chest—a victim of what a probe body concluded was a "suicide."

PDI PHOTO

DEATH OF ARMY 2ND LT. JESSICA CHAVEZ

A case closed and terminated

By Jerry Esplanada

(First of three parts)

An I-TEAM Report

THIS is the story of the first female graduate of the Philippine Military Academy to die a violent death. And her family, joined by the classmates of Army 2nd Lt. Jessica Chavez, are on a crusade to demand for truth and justice.

"I couldn't forget the way she looked. She was visibly troubled and nervous. Her hands were cold."

Rice and corn trader Efren Chavez was talking about his daughter, the late Army 2nd Lt. Jessica Chavez, a member of the PMA Sanghaya Class 2000.

While family members were busy preparing for New Year's Eve rites two years ago, the eldest of the three Chavez children showed up at their two-story residence in Poblacion, Sta. Cruz, Ilocos Sur, located just a few meters away from the sleepy town's public market.

"That very minute I knew something was wrong," recalled the young military officer's father.

"We were all surprised and puzzled when Jessica went on emergency leave just to be home for the New Year celebration. She had just spent her Christmas break with us."

"Jessica embraced me tightly," Efren recalled. "Then came the

A CASE / A23

WHAT'S INSIDE

Afuang ambushed A22
Victim of SC injustice? A22
Police collar brains behind missionary slay A23

Fernando on NPA hitlist for 'oppressing' the poor

By Carlito Pablo,
Leila B. Salaverria in Manila,
and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

FOR "oppressing the people," particularly street vendors, Bayani Fernando, chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), has been included in the hit list of the New People's Army.

A Palace official, who has seen the "list," made this revelation even as communist rebels denied that they had come up with high-profile targets for assassination.

"Our intelligence services have submitted reports on lists they've been able to acquire," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Since his appointment as MMDA chair, Fernando has launched a campaign to clear streets and sidewalks of obstructions, including hawkers. Vendors have condemned Fernando's campaign, which has resulted in the death of a vendor, as "anti-poor" and "Hitler-like," but others praise him for exhibiting political will.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier confirmed the existence of a hit list that included her chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao.

Ms Macapagal said Romulo

FERNANDO/ A23

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SC to Atienza: Reply in 10 days

By Jerome Aning

THE SUPREME Court has given Manila Mayor Lito Atienza 10 days to explain why he has not implemented a city ordinance banning the operation of the controversial oil depot, as Pandacan residents have demanded in a suit they filed against the city mayor.

The Supreme Court's Third Division, without giving course to the petitioners' complaint, issued the order in a resolution dated Dec. 18 but made public only yesterday.

The Social Justice Society and Pandacan residents belonging to the United Front to Oust the Oil Depot filed the petition for mandamus on Dec. 3, 2002.

The SJS and the UFO-OD want the High Tribunal to implement an ordinance which the City Council passed on Nov. 28, 2001, ordering the closure of the depot in six months for being a fire hazard and a potential target of terrorists.

But on June 26, 2002, Atienza entered into an understanding with the oil firms which were allowed to continue operating the depot subject to several conditions.

The petitioners contend that the understanding could not supersede the ordinance.

An opposition councilor, using the same argument, has also filed a criminal case against Atienza before the Office of the Ombudsman.

SJS President Samson Alcantara said he has high hopes for the suit because the SC did not dismiss it outright.

Normally, he said, petitions for mandamus are turned over to lower courts.

'Erroneous, irresponsible'

FORMER Education Secretary Raul Roco yesterday drew flak from Manila mayor Lito Atienza for backing an environment group opposed to construction work on the Arroceros Forest Park.

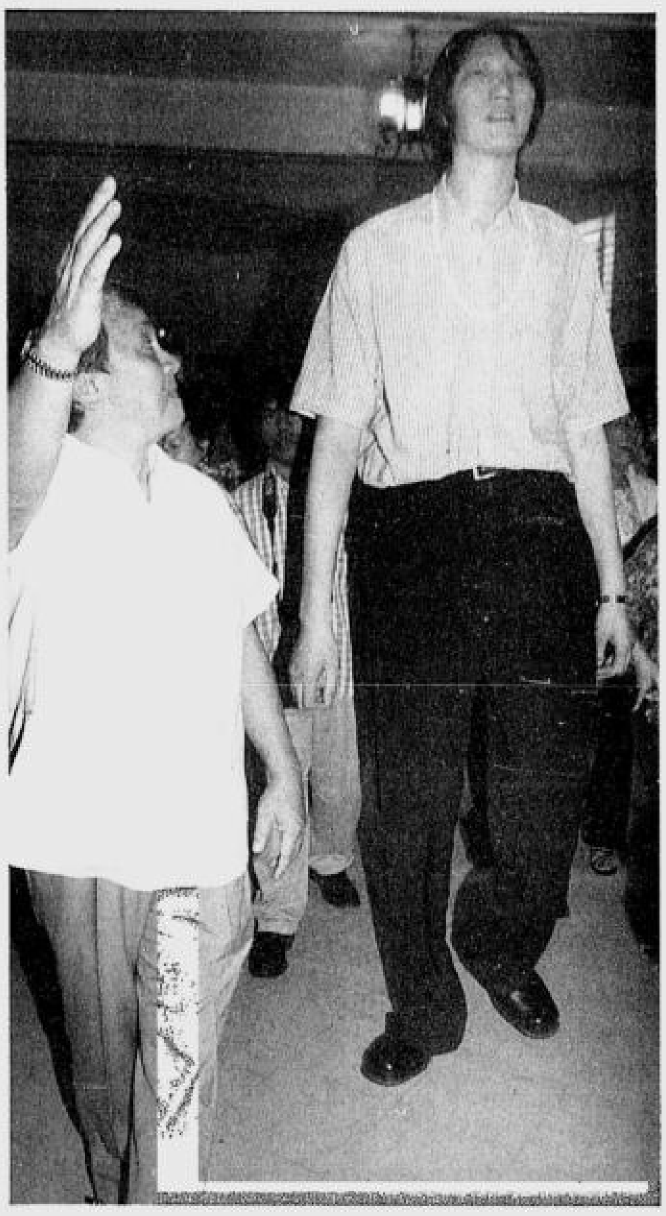
Atienza said he was "saddened" by Roco's "erroneous and very irresponsible" statement on Saturday criticizing City Hall for its plan to erect a building for teachers in the forest park.

"Mr. Roco should have at least asked us about our local development plans before saying anything," the mayor said. "It is really unfortunate that he decided to criticize us before knowing the facts."

Observers, however, wonder if there was politics involved in Atienza's retort.

Atienza, as executive vice president of the Liberal Party, recently rejected some LP members' endorsement of Roco as 2004 presidential candidate.

But Roco explained last Saturday that politics had nothing to do with his appearance. He said it was his godmother, Quezon Institute President Zenaida Avancena-Quezon, who asked her to guest at the park's opening. *J. Aning*



8-FOOT WONDER

Chinese Wang Changiu (right), 27, 8-foot-2-inches tall and weighing 300 lbs., dwarfs Manila Mayor Lito Atienza during a courtesy call at City Hall. Chiangiu and 100 other circus artists belonging to the China Jiangsu Overseas Troupe are in Manila to grace the Chinese New Year eve celebration on Jan. 31. Changiu, from Hunan province, is married with one child, aged 11. He performs magic, plays the flute and is an expert in Chinese calligraphy. He's said to be the world's tallest living man.

ERIK ARAZAS

Afuang ambushed

By Leila B. Salaverria

AN amused Abner Afuang views the bullet holes in his car hours after he survived an ambush in Makati.

ERIK ARAZAS

ABNER L. Afuang, a former mayor of Pagsanjan who was renowned for his colorful protest acts, survived an early morning ambush in Makati City yesterday morning.

He claimed the failed assassination was a result of his anti-Purchased Power Adjustment stance.

The ex-Makati City cop was quick to brush off suggestions that the ambush was led by New People's Army hit squads.

He said the rebel group only targets officials who are perceived to have been abusing the country.

"*Isinasantabi ko iyon kasi wala akong utang sa bayan* (I am not considering the notion because I have not done anything wrong to the country)," he said in his statement to the police.

Afuang was alone in his red Toyota Corolla (THX-768) when shot at several times by two unidentified men on board a black Honda Civic at around 4:30 a.m. yesterday. He was on his way to a McDonald's store along Paseo de Roxas, Salcedo Village where he has been regularly eating breakfast with friends for the past several years.

Afuang told police he was about to make a left turn to the fast food restaurant when he noticed a black car behind him. He said he became suspicious when the car did not pass after he stopped since the road was wide and traffic-free.

Next thing he knew, one of the suspects in the passenger seat of the black car fired four successive shots at his vehicle.

Afuang said he stepped on the gas and drove over the curb near McDonald's, hitting a trash can in the process. His assailants sped off toward Ayala Avenue.

Afuang was unhurt in the attack, but the left rear door and the rear portion near the fuel tank of his car had bullet holes. Fragments of bullet slugs, suspected to be from a revolver, were recovered inside the ex-mayor's car.

Afuang said he was unable to get the plate number of the car, although he was able to note the letters M and V. He said one of the suspects had a military-style haircut.

Afuang said the suspects seemed to be familiar with his routine. He added that last Friday, he noticed a black car at the McDonald's parking lot that left as soon as he came.

The ex-mayor said he had received death threats from callers who warned him about his campaign against the PPA.

"*Sobrang yabang mo* Afuang. *Itigil mo na ang paglaban mo sa* PPA. *Kung gusto mo patayin ka namin* (You're too arrogant. Stop fighting against the PPA. We'll kill you)," he quoted one of his anonymous callers as telling him.

In June last year, Afuang, who has been known for his protest fasts, staged a 10-day hunger strike to pressure the government into stopping the collection of exorbitant PPA charges, and to help bolster public resistance to it.

A movie on his life was made in 1988 and starred action star Philip Salvador.

Afuang also made headlines for his flag-burning acts. In the early 90's, he set fire to a Singaporean flag to protest the execution of Filipino domestic helper Flor Contemplacion.

In 2002, he burned a Malaysian flag in Manila to protest Malaysia's treatment of Filipinos in Sabah.

When Afuang was mayor of Pagsanjan town in Laguna, he earned repute for his tough-cop style of governance, especially for his efforts to rid the town of drugs and pedophiles. *With reports from PDI Research*

Secretary Roxas says he's not marrying Vina

TRADE Secretary Manuel Roxas II has finally broken his silence on his reported romance with singer-actress Vina Morales.

"This is simply not true. There is also no truth (to the rumor) that I am marrying her," Roxas told the INQUIRER in Roxas City yesterday.

He said reports about his supposed forthcoming marriage with the singer-actress were quite unfair to Morales.

"Vina is (a) good (person). She is well loved (by many people) and I respect her," Roxas said.

But some radio broadcasters in Roxas said the reported romance between Morales and Roxas could have been concocted by the Secretary's handlers to "make him click with the masses."

Roxas refused to elaborate when asked about his political plans in the wake of reports that he was planning to run for either vice president or senator in next year's elections.

He said he agreed with President Macapagal-Arroyo to set aside politics first and to buckle down to work to solve the country's problems.

But Capiz Gov. Vicente Bermejo, a close ally of Roxas, said it is all systems go for the Secretary's senatorial bid in 2004.

"I think the whole (Roxas) family is behind Mar's senatorial bid," Bermejo said. *Gerry Pagharion, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Victim of SC injustice?

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

MUCH has been written about the killing of Generoso Miranda, 29, scion of the owners of Miranda Bookstore over a traffic incident in 1984.

The killer, Navy Capt. Eladio C. Tangan, has been arrested after the Supreme Court found him guilty of homicide and even increased the prison sentence to a maximum of 14 years from the two years imposed by the lower court. Tangan has begun serving his sentence at the National Penitentiary.

Tangan's nephew, Anthony Emerson, has written this writer saying he wanted the public to know "what really happened"

Emerson sent me a copy of his Uncle Ladd's letter to him which I am publishing in toto:

Dear Anton,

In 1984, I was the deputy chief for Naval Intelligence Operations of NISF (Naval Intelligence and Security Force). At that time we were conducting intel opns (intelligence operations-RT) against the Sparrow Unit of the NPA with Pasay City as our area of concern.

In that night of the incident, I was supervising my intel agents and at about 2330H (11:30 pm-RT) , I decided to return to our HQ in Fort Bonifacio. In going back to my office, I took the route of Buendia Ave. and turned left at Roxas Blvd. As soon as I turned, I saw this car in front of me with two occupants exploding what I believed to be firecrackers. I decided to pass ahead of the car and signified my intention by blowing my horn several times. As soon as I passed, I accelerated towards Parañaque.

Before I reached the Redemptorist Road, I reduced my speed because I was intending to turn left and pass by Lyn Nam Restaurant to buy some food. Before I could turn, a car cut my path and stopped in front of me and in the process damaging the right side of my car. Immediately, two occupants got out of their car and approached me with one coming from in front of me and the other from behind. I was forced to get out of my car to inquire what they wanted. In a threatening manner they berated me by saying, "*P***g in* mo, bakit mo kami nilampasan?*" I had to answer back, "*Bakit, bawal ba ang lumampas?*" After which I identified myself. At this point, they started to hit me. I tried to parry their blows but unsuccessful (*sic*). I was hit with a hard object on my right eyebrow and blood started oozing from it.

Because of my bloodied wound, I could hardly see so I decided to get into my car but I could not do so because they were pulling me out. In spite of this, I was able to get hold of my service firearm. As soon as they saw the gun they started to grapple for possession. While we were grappling for the gun we fell down but before we hit the ground the gun went off.

After that the gun was taken away from me by bystanders. I was able to free myself and surrendered to a mobile patrol in the vicinity. I was taken to the Parañaque Medical Clinic where my wound was treated. After that, I was taken to the police station.

As a result of this incident I was charged with murder and illegal possession of firearm. This was later downgraded to homicide and illegal possession of firearm.

After the trial, I was found guilty of incomplete self-defense. The trial judge said there was (1) no provocation on my part, (2) there was passion and obfuscation and 3) the means employed to defend myself were not justified.

Because of these findings, I was sentenced to two months to two years and four months. My preventive confinement of four years and a few months was credited in full.

Since I have served my sentence more than enough, I was for all intents and purposes a free man.

But because of my desire to salvage my military career, I appealed my case.

The Court of Appeals upheld the decision of the lower court in toto but modified the civil aspect.

Thinking that nothing worse could happen, I appealed my case before the Supreme Court.

To our nightmare, the Supreme Court reversed drastically the findings of the lower courts. The Supreme Court had to change all the facts of the case to arrive at a new decision.

The most glaring error of the Supreme Court is when they attributed to me a statement that the gun fell and it fired, hitting the victim, which caused his death.

This statement I never said during the course of the trial.

Because of the reversed decision of the Supreme Court, my sentence was modified to 6 years to 14 years and 8 months.

I am a victim of injustice and I have no doubt that money changed hands somewhere along the way.

Uncle Ladd.

***

Approximately two years ago, I wrote about the same decision by the Supreme Court on the homicide case against Navy Capt. Eladio C. Tangan in this space.

Quoting unnamed lawyers, I said that the Supreme Court erred in increasing the penalty on Tangan because it is very rarely the function of the high court to look into the conflicting versions of evidence by the trial courts and the Court of Appeals.

In other words, the Supreme Court only rules on questions of law. In the case of Tangan, the high court took it upon itself to rule on questions of facts which are best left to trial courts.

Unthinkable: Man hurls his daughter from the 4th floor

By Philip Tubeza

HE threw the bloodied girl away like a piece of old, unwanted toy.

"*Heto, saluhin ninyo* (Here, catch her!)"

This was what vendor Victor S. Perez, 33, said before he hurled his three-year-old baby girl off the fourth floor of an apartment building in Tondo, Manila after midnight yesterday.

Police said Baby Melody was apparently dead when her father threw her away. The girl had five stab wounds in her chest.

Perez, of Room 403 Building E Sambahayan sa Rawis Tenement Building, Sta. Fe Street, Tondo, Manila was believed to be high on drugs when he did this horrific act, said Detective Ernesto Jose Jr., of the Western Police District-homicide section.

The police found shabu paraphernalia—a tooter, bunsen burner, and sachets with shabu residue—in the suspect's room, Jose said.

They also recovered the 13-inch long kitchen knife which Perez used in stabbing the girl, he added.

The suspect later claimed the baby was not his. He added that he did the dastardly crime because he saw his wife lately "with another man."

But Perez's wife, Marlyn, 29, has been working in Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia as a domestic helper since October last year, Jose said.

The couple also has a son, older than Baby Melody who is under the care of their relatives.

Jose said the suspect usually left Baby Melody with his neighbor, Marcela Soner, 53, whenever he went to work.

But at around 11 p.m. yesterday, Soner sensed that something was wrong when Perez took his daughter away.

"I told him that she was already fast asleep but he suddenly grabbed her from her bed and took her out of my room," Soner said.

She asked for help from the suspect's elder brother Rogelio. But when he knocked on the suspect's room, Perez would not let him in.

Rogelio immediately asked for help from the Tondo police station. Minutes later, PO3 Reynaldo Macalino and PO2 Noel Baldonado arrived together with several barangay tanods.

But they were too late. They were still climbing the stairs on the third floor when the suspect slipped out of his room, went to the porch, and held out his daughter.

"*Heto, saluhin ninyo* (Here, catch)," Perez said before throwing her away.

The baby landed head first on the ground. Perez's neighbors were shocked when they saw her body.

Doctor Sherwin Villareal of the Gat Andres Bonifacio Hospital said that besides the girl's broken skull, the baby had five stab wounds in her chest.

Policemen immediately arrested Perez and slipped him out of the building before angry neighbors could lynch him.

The vendor, a high school graduate, faces the death penalty if convicted.

BF has 11 months to junk people's fear of garbage

By Leila Salaverria

BAYANI Fernando is trying to throw out fear and he has just 11 months to do it.

As the countdown to his self-imposed December 2003 deadline begins, the Metro Manila Development Authority chair said he is intensifying his information campaign on the 2,000-hectare waste processing facility that he has proposed to be built in Southern Luzon to help ease Metro Manila's growing garbage woes.

"We're pressed for time," Fernando said yesterday. "We planned that by December this year, the waste processing facility would be operational. I'm still hoping."

Fernando said that through constant explanations of the details and objectives of his plan, he hopes to eliminate the fear among Quezon residents that Metro Manila's garbage would be bad for the community that would host the proposed facility.

"As long as the residents are beginning to understand the project, their fear of it will disappear," Fernando said yesterday. "Right now, those opposed to the plan are just afraid of garbage."

There is no other way to address the problem but through public information, he stressed.

He said he would meet with Quezon officials next month to discuss the facility. He would also tackle the thorny issue on TV shows and in advertisements, he said.

Fernando said he has to get consent to convert a vast area into a landfill, a material recovery facility and a waste treatment plant soon.

If his proposal is not implemented, he would begin to look at extending the railways to the north and bringing the facility to the lahar areas of Luzon, he said.

According to Fernando's proposal, Metro Manila's trash would be transported by train. As of now, the country's railways only reach the Southern Luzon provinces.

At the facility, the garbage would be sorted. Non-biodegradable waste materials would be brought to recycling factories.

Fernando has said the residents of the community hosting the facility need not be afraid of garbage since it would actually be their ticket to industrialization, one of the benefits he mentioned to convince the residents to accept his project.

Group warns: When oil firms increase prices, bus operators will jack up fares

By Christian Esguerra

THE 2,000-STRONG Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (Imboa) yesterday threatened to seek a P1 minimum fare increase should Shell or Petron jack up prices of petroleum products.

Imboa President Claire 'dela Fuente said the fare hike petition could even reach a high of P2 depending on the rate of increase by any of the two major oil companies.

If that happens, the minimum fare would shoot up to P6 for ordinary buses and P11 for air-conditioned buses, she said.

"It has reached a critical stage for public transport when diesel prices hit the P15-per-liter mark," Dela Fuente said. "At its present fare level and the increasing cost of oil products, it would be difficult and definitely unviable for public transport to keep operating without a fare increase."

In the meantime, the Imboa president urged the public to boycott Caltex products since prices at other oil companies, including the new players, are still cheaper.

Caltex recently increased the per-liter price of gasoline by 55 centavos, and that of diesel and kerosene by 45 centavos.

A case closed and terminated

From page A21

bombshell. She told me she was quitting her job."

But the 23-year-old Jessica did not say why.

Efren said his daughter seemed "hesitant to give any details despite all my proddings."

Not her usual self

"Later at the family outing in Patique (beach), I also failed to convince her to tell us what was bothering her," the father continued. "Everyone noticed she was not her usual self."

Jessica later reiterated her intention to leave the Armed Forces for good during what her mother Milwelda called a "heart-to-heart" talk with her grandmother, Ernesta Manglioan, whom she fondly called "Inang."

In tears, Jessica also confided to the 70-year-old Ernesta that "she did not intend to return to Fort Bonifacio anymore."

At the army base, Jessica was platoon leader of the 191st Military Police Battalion.

But she was still prevailed upon by her loved ones to report back to her Army unit on Jan. 5, 2001.

Barely breathing

Thirty-five days later, two of her Army colleagues found a barely-breathing Jessica inside her quarters with a gunshot wound in the chest.

A little after 7 a.m. on Feb. 9, Jessica was declared dead dead on arrival by attending physicians at the nearby Fort Bonifacio Hospital.

In a Feb. 13, 2001 medico-legal report, the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory in Camp Crame listed the cause of her death as "hemorrhagic shock (as a fesult of a gunshot wound)."

Late last year, a military court wound up its six-month inquiry without any indictment. It ruled that the Army second lieutenant died of a "self-inflicted" wound.

Like the rest of the Chavez family, Lola Ernesta believed Jessica was murdered, and her death was not accidental.

She stressed "it wasn't suicide, like some of her friends and colleagues in the military have been saying all along."

Shortly before the last Christmas break, an INQUIRER team visited the Chavez ancestral home in barangay Padaoil, located on the foot of the Baogan hills, about 7.5 kilometers from Poblacion.

There, Jessica's folks treated us to a typical Ilocano lunch where they took turns reminiscing their "happy times when Jessica was still around."

Lola Ernesta was hesitant at first to join Efren and Milwelda in the INQUIRER interview. To my surprise, she later butted in and shared with this writer some of her favorite grandchild's "secrets."

Speaking in her native Ilocano, she disclosed that "the last time we talked Jessica seemed not only depressed but also very nervous.

"She gave me the impression her superiors had asked her to do something she was not brave enough to do," the old woman said. "And because of that, she was afraid to go back to Fort Bonifacio (INQUIRER's Ilocos Sur and Abra correspondent Leoncio Balbin Jr. translated Lola Ernesta's disclosures)."

Jessica, she said, had "indicated her predicament had something to do with money, something like a big transaction."

The cadet with members of her Sanghaya Class 2000 at the academy.

"(Jessica) said she did not want to be part of it, whatever it was she didn't tell me," according to Ernesta.

"She was crying all the time. At one point, she asked if I wanted to have lots of money. I said yes as long as there was nothing illegal or irregular about the source of funds."

According to Lola Ernesta, she had "no idea Jessica's problem was that serious.

"Had I known, I would have been the first to ask her to find another job somewhere else."

Keeping information

She had earlier gotten the ire of Jessica's parents "for keeping to herself the revealing information about the possible motive behind (the) daughter's murder.

"We only learned about Jessica's problem when she was already dead," Jessica's father said. "Her lola should have told us everything much earlier."

Efren said he still felt numb and could not help getting emotional after he was thrown into what he called "this state of grief and despair."

Efren, a new recruit of Padaoil's Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu), admitted he has yet to come to terms with "the fact that my daughter Jessica had been killed."

When interviewed, the Albay native said he was inclined to believe government probers had engaged in a "cover-up so as not to rock the boat."

"Investigators did not even bother to check what some people who were really close to Jessica knew about the case," Efren told the INQUIRER.

He also cited "inconsistencies" in the pronouncements of investigating bodies like the National Bureau of Investigation, which ruled out suicide in the death of his daughter, "although (the NBI) has yet to wrap up the probe."

Sometime in February 2001, Dr. Maximo Reyes, chief of the NBI medico-legal division, told media it would have been "very unusual" if Jessica had killed herself.

According to Reyes, a separate NBI autopsy had shown that the victim could not have shot herself, contrary to the conclusion drawn by police investigators.

"If this was so, it would have been very awkward," said Reyes.

JESSICA looking prim in uniform at the PMA.

He noted that the .45-caliber bullet that killed Jessica entered her chest and exited in the back.

That, Reyes said, showed "the gun was fired from a distance, definitely not at close range.

"Jessica could have placed her service firearm at her temple or in her mouth," according to Reyes. "It would have been awkward if she chose to fire at her chest."

The death certificate issued by Army Maj. Antonio 50 at Fort Bonifacio General Hospital did not give the type of bullet used, the number of wounds she suffered or the exact cause of death.

Paraffin tests conducted on Jessica's body by the Philippine National Police yielded negative results.

The tests were performed on Feb. 14, 2001, five days after Jessica died.

Paraffin test

In a report, the NBI said "in cases involving shooting incidents where paraffin test is required, the person suspected to have fired a gun should be subjected to the test immediately and in no case should it be made 72 hours after the shooting."

In order to detect gunpowder nitrates, such tests should be conducted not later than three days after the shooting incident has taken place, the NBI said.

The NBI, however, noted that "not all guns have a tendency to throw gunpowder nitrates onto the hands that fired them."

"Many revolvers and practically all automatic pistols do not leak enough residues that can be detected by paraffin tests. This may be explained by the fact that automatic pistols are almost completely enclosed and nearly all powder particles are forced away from the hand of the person firing the gun."

In a March 3, 2001 report, the NBI's Neuro-Psychiatric Services office said it found Jessica "to have maintained emotional stability until the occurrence of her mysterious death."

NBI psychologists Angelito Eligado and Ma. Cynthia Alcuaz cited data from available records and information gathered (from people close to the late Army officer) when they ruled out suicidal behavior from Jessica's personality profile.

Above par

Eligado and Alcuaz learned that Jessica's "intellectual capacity is above par," that her "emotional defenses used under stress depict high frustration tolerance," and that she had "sound interpersonal relations" and a "generally happy disposition."

According to Alcuaz, some investigators assigned to the case had reported "depression was evident, prior to the (incident)."

"But its degree or extent is not sufficient to result to (sic) self-destruction," Alcuaz said.

A statement analysis of love letters Jessica supposedly wrote to her boyfriend, Army 2Lt Alvin Tanguilig, revealed that she was "in dire emotional straits, brought about by her present relationship and her immediate past failed relationship (with Navy Ens. Journal Azurin, also of PMA Class 2000)."

"A person in her emotional state is prone to make abrupt decision(s) (in) her life," opined lawyer Ricardo Diaz of the bureau's International Police Division, who also analyzed Jessica's handwriting.

But the Neuro-Psychiatric Services office's findings that Jessica did not commit suicide was "not absolute since the deceased was all alone (and) nobody can tell what actually happened," the bureau later said in a report.

"The possibility that the deceased committed suicide cannot be ascertained nor her death was accidental because nobody was present but the deceased herself," the NBI also said.

Also in early March 2001, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco was quoted as having told media that "based on the scientific and forensic investigation (conducted by the bureau), the result positively showed that Chavez died by her own hands," and that Jessica's case was already considered solved.

On March 9, 2001, Efren Chavez called up the NBI where he learned from agents handling the case that "they were not done yet with the investigation."

"That is why, we were shocked and disturbed by Director Wycoco's pronouncement," Efren said.

On June 11, 2001, nearly four months after it started probing the case, the NBI's Special Action Unit finally came up with a 196-page report where it recommended that the case be closed and terminated.

(To be continued)

Police collar brains behind missionary slay

By Alcuin Papa

AFTER two weeks in hiding, the reported mastermind behind the brutal slaying of a born-again missionary and her assistant, has been arrested over the weekend.

Suspect Nomer Mallo, 18, a construction worker of Area 1-A, Luzon Avenue, Barangay Old Balara, Quezon City, is now behind bars at the Central Police's District Homicide Section.

The suspect was arrested last Friday in Iguig, Cagayan, where he decided to hide out from authorities after killing Myrnaloi Beebe and her assistant Juvelyn Parejo last Jan. 15.

On Jan. 17, Mallo's cohorts Jesus Austero of Luzon Avenue, Old Balara, was arrested by police. Austero pointed to Mallo and Ralph Lester as his cohorts. Lester eventually surrendered to authorities.

Charges of robbery with double homicide have been filed against the three before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

They were denied bail.

The bodies of Beebe and Parejo were found inside the bedroom of their house on Viola Street, St. Dominic Subdivision, Barangay Culiat, Quezon City.

The bodies bore multiple stab wounds and their valuables were missing.

Police said the suspects had already admitted to robbing the suspects, but said it was not their intention to kill the two victims.

They said they had to stab the victims when they tried to cry for help.

Their only purpose was to rob the two women who had in their possession a large amount of cash.

NBI collars 2 'NPA' men for extortion

TWO ALLEGED members of the communist New People's Army were arrested in Makati City for extorting P100,000 from a Korean working for a Mt. Pinatubo rehabilitation project, according to the National Bureau of Investigations.

NBI Director Reynaldo G. Wycoco said Nedie C. Bariacion, 28, and Ronaldo Y. Clores, both residents of Novaliches, Quezon City, were demanding P100,000 in "revolutionary taxes" from a Korean who requested not to be identified.

Clores happened to be the driver of the Korean victim.

On Jan. 25, NBI men laid a trap for suspect Bariacion, and arrested him while he was receiving marked money in Makati City.

During his interrogation, he identified Clores as the mastermind behind the extortion. *Mathew Murphy*

Fernando on NPA hitlist...

From page A21

Kintanar, the former NPA chief who was slain by his former comrades last week, was also on the list.

Asked about the hit list, Fernando urged the NPA to spare him.

"I don't think that's fair," he said. "I am doing my duty for the betterment of our streets. I am calling on the NPA not to (put me on that list)."

Fernando brushed off accusations that he had been singling out the poor, saying that his campaign targets both the rich and the poor who put up obstructions on sidewalks.

"There's no ideology involved (in the campaign)," he said. "I'm doing this for order and progress, and for the good of all. In fact, the first to benefit from my sidewalk clearing drive would be the poor who are the ones who most often use our roadways."

This year, Fernando vowed to intensify his sidewalk clearing operations, which will be expanded nationwide following his appointment as acting secretary of the Public Works and Highways Department.

The Palace source said Tiglao, a former communist cadre in his youth, was condemned for "high treason."

The same source noted that the name of former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile was included in one list. Enrile was the former defense secretary of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The source confirmed reports that Foreign Affairs Secretary Blas Ople was also on the list. Last year, Ople led a top diplomatic mission to Europe that resulted in the designation of the Communist Party of the Philippines, along with its armed wing, the NPA, as a terrorist organization.

But CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said government officials were on the NPA hit list, but not Tiglao and Ople.

Rosal said Tiglao had not committed "outright crimes" against the movement.

As for Ople, he said the foreign secretary was "trying hard" to insert his name into the list.

"To my knowledge, those on the list are plunderers, torturers and those who violated the rights of citizens," Rosal, speaking in Filipino, said in a radio interview.

He said government officials been been on older NPA hit lists.

The government earlier said that the NPA had created a National Partisan Command, a special operations group which targeted some personalities like Kintanar. Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and Col. Victor Corpus, chief of the military's intelligence service, were also said to be targets of the NPA.

Rosal did not mention Reyes and Corpus during the radio interview.

At a press briefing, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said, "If they (rebels) say there is no hit list, that doesn't mean that government officials concerned would let down their guard."

"We just have to take the word of the intelligence community because that was the information given to us," Bunye said.

In a cell phone interview, Rosal denied the allegation of the military and police that there was an NPA hit squad in Metro Manila tasked with killing government officials and other personalities.

"All members of the NPA special unit that did the job on Kintanar are now on their way back to the guerilla zones where they originally belong. No one will remain in Manila for security reasons," Rosal said.

"But if the people's court will order them anew for another implementation of a punishment order, that's another matter," he said. *With a report from Martin P. Marfil*

AIM Managing the Arts Program wows artists in Singapore

A TOTAL of 31 students, representing flagship art companies and cultural institutions in Singapore, attended AIM's first Singaporean offering of the Managing the Arts Program (MAP) under the New Programs Development.

The National Arts Council of Singapore supported and endorsed the program through a 50 percent tuition subsidy to local artists. Playwright Robert Yeo, and Khrisnan Pillay Bhaskhar, artistic director/founder of the Bhaskar Arts Academy – two artists who have equivalent national artist status in the city-state – enrolled in the course along with professionals from the National Heritage Board, National Arts Council, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Repertory Theater, Singapore Lyric Opera, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore Dance Theater and numerous other cultural and educational institutions.

The students' profile was impressive: two with PhD, five with MA, and a number of honors graduates from the National University of Singapore. The students were also of mixed nationalities: one French, one English, one Israeli, one Danish, and two Singaporean Indians. The rest were Singaporean Chinese.

AIM professors Cecilia B. Manikan, Gaston D. Ortigas Jr., Eduardo L. Roberto, and Maurino P. Bolante, administered the lectures with the local support of professor Ning S. de Guzman. In addition, a very successful MAP videoconference on Strategic Planning with Graduate School of Business Dean Ed Morato inaugurated AIM's Global Distance Learning module.

"AIM is making a buzz among cultural officers and artists in the global Renaissance City," observes professor Manikan, the MAP director. "Our graduates are suffused with praise and gratefulness for the seven hectic days of managing through critical, creative and systematic thinking...Most of all, they are thankful for the passion, the inspiration, and the renewed appreciation of truth and character as solid bases for artistic integrity."

As a result of the program, some of the graduates have decided to establish their own artistic companies. Others are meeting with their respective boards to review and come up with a more meaningful vision, mission and policies. Many others expressed their desire to study at AIM to learn more.

The successful Singapore MAP marks the 4th run of this program, which was launched in Manila back in Oct. 2001. The next two runs of the MAP are scheduled in Manila on Feb. 3 to 14, and on June 16 to 27. For more details, contact Frances Billano at telephone number 892-4011 local 144 and fax number 867-2114, or through e-mail address: artsmanagement@dataserve.aim.edu.ph

FILIPINO FOOD AT WORLD TRAVEL MARKET

Chef Raymond Reyes (left), a scion of the cooking family that built the famous Aristocrat Restaurant, shows Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon (right) samples of popular dishes he prepared for the Mama Sita's Mixes and Sauces booth at the World Travel Market held in Excel, London last November. Reyes whipped up servings of adobo, chicken and pork tocino and beef tapa for sampling by guests of the exhibit, as well as for the Philippine reception hosted by the Philippine ambassador to the UK.

MMG PRESIDENT SHOWS UP

Lawyer Ernesto V. Villagarcia, legal counsel of over a thousand investors / claimants of Mateo Management Group Holding Company Inc. (MMGHCI), is shown in photo shaking hands with Engr. Ervin Y. Mateo, MMG president and chief executive officer of MMGHCI after an early morning meeting last Saturday, January 21, in an undisclosed place in Metro Manila. Engr. Mateo has promised lawyer Villagarcia settlement of his investor / clients whose claims were presented to him at the meeting. At right is lawyer Lope Feble, lawyer of MMGHCI and at extreme left is lawyer Mar Santiago.

Lion dance at G3 for The Columns launch

GLORIETTA 3 mall breathes in greater luck and fortune when lion dancing takes place on Jan. 29, Wednesday, during the launch of The Columns, Ayala Avenue, the newest residential project where "living is just a few steps away from everything." The launch theme is "good luck, good fortune, good location."

Lion dancing comes to the 2nd floor of Glorietta 3 at about 4 p.m., at the display booth of the Community Innovations Inc. (CII), an Ayala Land company, which offers The Columns, Ayala Avenue for up-and-coming young professionals and starting families.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue is a trio of 30-story residential condominium buildings on the corner of Ayala Avenue and Sen. Gil Puyat (Buendia) avenue. The residential towers rise from a seven-story podium that encompasses parking, lobbies, dining and retail spaces. It brings community and nature into the heart of the urban scene with open-air patio with swimming pools, jogging paths, day-care center, recreational and fitness lounges.

The grand launch for The Columns, Ayala Avenue is additionally auspicious in taking place at the beginning of the Chinese Year of the Goat. The Goat signifies a love of beauty, a peaceful oneness with nature, and good fortune in matters of wealth, all of which can also be said of The Columns, Ayala Avenue.

The launch starts with registration at 3:30 p.m. with CII property specialists at the Glorietta 3 E-Lounge. The Lion Dance moves at 4 p.m. from Food Choices to E-Lounge and Le Rosh. A continuous audio-visual presentation of The Columns starts after the welcome speech of Angela DV Lacson, CII president.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue keeps prosperity in mind. Built by Community Innovations Inc., it's the first midrange residential product with the backing of Ayala Land, the Philippines' most trusted developer. Its accommodations are based on quality and affordability. It will be managed by Ayala Property Management Corporation (APMC), ensuring top-notch service.

Program for new directors

A CORPORATE governance and risk management program for new bank directors will be conducted by the Development Finance Institute (DFI), the training provider of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, on Jan. 30 and 31. Call the DFI at telefax 815-2888 or cellphone 0915-9719168.

Women of Library at the Venue

THE VENUE, the flourishing nightlife destination of Davao City, recently brought DJ Steve Bamford of the United Kingdom Jan. 18. DJ Bamford played his cutting-edge music concentrated on the tough breakbeat and the best of UK's dark-tribal progressive house. On Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, the Women of Library, featuring female comic divas Sherly, Joyce, Eva, Jo and Maris will showcase their own style of music and laughter. For more inquiries, call 082-2244150, 225-3825.

3RD RUNNER-UP
1ST RUNNER-UP
MS ASIA PACIFIC 2002
2ND RUNNER-UP

PAGEANT WINNERS VISIT RICKY REYES

The winners of the recently held 'Ms Asia-Pacific Quest' in the country visited the taping of Beauty Plus hosted and produced by Ricky Reyes with Cris Aquino at the helm at the Scriptovision studios in N. Domingo Street, San Juan. Impressed by the artistry of Ricky as he performed a make-over on a student-model, the beauty queens sought his counsel on donning proper make-up and hair style that make them more stunning and chic. Beauty Plus is aired Sundays 11 a.m. to 12 noon at RPN-9. Televiewers delight on the different segments like 'Telenegosyo,' 'Cooking Up,' 'Straight from the Expert,' 'Crush ng Bayan' and 'Stay Active, Stay Healthy.' Photo shows (from left) 3rd runner up Mirriam Chui – Philippines; 1st runner up Ksenia Volkova – Russia; Ricky Reyes; Ms Asia Pacific 2002 Kim So Yun of Korea; 2nd runner up Tina Cchatwal – India; and 4th runner up Hshawasya Sukitdeo – Fiji.

National Museum marks 5th anniversary

ON Feb. 12, the National Museum marks the 5th anniversary of its relocation to its permanent home in the new National Museum Complex in Agrifina Circle. As a leading organization of Museum friends, the Museum Foundation of the Philippines is celebrating this historic event with a dinner and program called Coming Home.

The celebration pays tribute to former president Fidel V. Ramos, acknowledging his role in giving a permanent home to the Museum. President Ramos was responsible for returning the former Legislative Building to the National Museum after it had been occupied by Congress for nearly a century, in addition to providing the Museum with two other buildings.

Coming Home will be held at 7 p.m., on Sunday, Feb. 16 at the quadrangle of the National Museum of the Philippine People (former Finance Department Building, Finance Road, Manila). The tribute will also launch a fund-raising effort to build an endowment fund dedicated to the enhancement of services to the National Museum through the programs initiated by the Museum Foundation. There will be a jazz concert by the Executives' Band featuring the former First Lady, Mrs Amelita Ramos. Mishka Arellano Adams, a young jazz singer will also perform.

For inquiries call Virgilio A. Reyes, corporate secretary and Museum Foundation PRO, at telephone/fax numbers (63-2) 404-2685 / 850-616; mobile (0916) 913-2999; email: themuseumfoundation@yahoo.com.

BITS & Clips

Expo boosts local food industry

THE PHILIPPINE Food Processors and Exporters Organization (Philfoodex), the DA and the DTI-Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development organizes the 2nd Philippine Expo 2003 to boost the local food industry. To be held at the SM Megatrade Halls from Jan. 29 to Feb. 2, the event will gather some 200 small and medium companies from all over the regions. Highlights include culinary competitions, cooking demonstrations, seminars on food packaging and labeling techniques. Included are lectures from Mario Sanches, Cris Ambrosio, Ching Geronimo, Alberto Cariso and Olive Enriquez. The event is supported by Citibank, Planters Bank, Pagcor, Vantage, DAR, Quedancor, NFA, and Joey@92.3. Cut Unlimited Inc. is the organizer of the event. For inquiries, call 436-3556 to 57 or 925-3519.

Lessons in a light-hearted musical

FOR THE first time in 22 years "Artistang Artlets" (AA), the official theater guild of the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Santo Tomas, stages a children's musical play. "Larawang Kapilas-Puso," written by Carlos Palanca awardee Dong delos Reyes, is an adaptation of a romantic Japanese folktale. The play is set in a fictional old Japan where a greedy Daimyo rules and gets everything he wishes by force. The play has lots of singing, dancing and comedy that the children will surely enjoy watching. Play director and AA artistic director is Angeli delos Reyes. "Larawang Kapilas-Puso" is produced by Marianne Gomez. The play runs at the Rizal Conference Hall of the Saint Raymound Building in UST from Feb. 20 to 22 with two timeslots. For tickets and other inquiries, call Marianne at 0919-8453662 or Madz at 3638280/0920-5652800.

1ST CENTURY TUNA CULINARY MEET

Century Tuna, the country's leading canned tuna meat is launching a great event to send off the new year to a healthy start. The company, recognizing the Philippines as one of the leading tuna-fishing countries in the world, has crowned this versatile fish as 'super meat' and has deemed it only fitting that a contest to be held to celebrate its life-sustaining and health-maintaining attributes. Dubbed the Century Tuna Culinary Meet 2003, this is a consumer-based competition open to all residents of Greater Manila Area. It has two divisions: the amateur and the student division. Century Tuna Culinary Meet 2003 is also made possible by Teflon, Prill, Aristori, Hunt's Tomato Sauce, Kraft Cheesemelt, Pillsbury all-purpose flour and cornstarch, Homepride pasta and Jolly (canned vegetables, soups and cooking oil) with media partners Working Mom, Health Today, Family Reader, My Home, Celebrity Recipes, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT and Joey 92.3. For more information, please call 811-1352 and 811-1720 or email beng@eventvisions.com.ph. Photo shows (from left) Ms Ayet Evangelista, senior product manager of Century Tuna; Ms Gigi Angkaw, consumer services manager of Century Canning Corp.; and Ms Della Belonio, market manager of Teflon.

BONAKID SUPPORTS 'MAGNIFICO'

A film focused on kids opens this year for the Philippine movie drama genre. Bonakid, the growing up milk for kids 1 year and older, supports 'Magnifico' not just for its excellent cinematic values but also because it exemplifies the well-rounded growth of young people in our society. The brand thrust 'and batang may laban' is what Bonakid aspires for every Filipino child and 'Magnifico' embodies this spirit. Bonakid is committed in instilling good values to young people. Don't miss the chance to know 'Magnifico'.

For sreening times, call 729-7777
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREEN BELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 8 MILE	1 THE HOT CHICK	1 ALL OVER THE GUY (EXCLUSIVE) 11:55, 1:50, 3:45, 5:40, 7:35, 9:30	1 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 1:00, 4:30, 8:00, 11:30	1 THE HOT CHICK
2 RING (ORIG. JAPANESE VERSION)	2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	2 RING (ORIG. JAPANESE VERSION) 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	2 THE HOT CHICK 12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:45, 11:00	2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
3 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS	3 8 MILE 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30	3 OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO Feb. 7, 8, 13, 14 & 15	3 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD) 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30	3 8 MILE
4 THE HOT CHICK	4 ANALYZE THAT		4 ANALYZE THAT 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	4 ONE HOUR PHOTO
	5 ONE HOUR PHOTO		5 8 MILE 11:45, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20	5 ANALYZE THAT
	6 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)			
	7 TRY SEVENTEEN			

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Or log on to www.sureseats.com
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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	TRY SEVENTEEN
2 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	8 MILE
4 GOLD (DTS ES)	ANALYZE THAT
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
6 GOLD (SDDS)	8 MILE
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	HOT CHICK
8	HALF PAST DEAD
9	ONE HOUR PHOTO
10	THE RING

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
Golden Pearl THX	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA ①②&③
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
3	BANGKERO

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	8 MILE
2	HOT CHICK
3	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	LORD OF THE RING
5	BANGKERO

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	THE RING
3	HOT CHICK
4	8 MILE
5	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
6	ANALYZE THAT

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	HALF PAST DEAD

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
2	LASTIKMAN

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	RESERVE
2	ALIPIN NG ALIW
3	RESERVE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	PAKAWALANG PUSO
2	BANGKERO
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8568

1 (SDDS)	8 MILE
4	HOT CHICK
5	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
7 (DTS)	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8 (SDDS)	THE RING
9 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	8 MILE
3	HOT CHICK
4 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
5	THE RING
6 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
7 (DTS)	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8	LASTIKMAN
9	BANGKERO

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4 (DOLBY)	8 MILE
5	HOT CHICK

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	8 MILE
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
5 (SDDS)	THE RING

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	
Lords	MASIKIP MAINIT
Jennet	RESERVE

MARKETMALL
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	TRY SEVENTEEN
2	LORD OF THE RING
3	HULI MO HULI KO
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	8 MILE
3	THE RING
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
5	ANALYZE THAT

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	LORD OF THE RING

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	8 MILE
2	THE RING
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HOT CHICK
4 (SDDS)	LOD OF THE RINGS 2
5 (DTS)	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	ONE HOUR PHOTO
7	ANAYLYZE THAT

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	BANGKERO
2	8 MILE
3 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	THE RING
2 (DTS)	8 MILE
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	HOT CHICK

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	THE RING
2 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS)	8 MILE
4	HOT CHICK

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	SWIM FAN
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	BANGKERO
2	HEAVEN
3 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
4	MANO PO

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	HALF PAST DEAD
2 (DTS)	BANGKERO
3	AGIMAT

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RING
2	LAKAS AT PAG-IBIG
3 (DTS)	THE RING
4	BANGKERO

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	LORD OF THE RING
2	HOT CHICK
3 (DTS)	BANGKERO
4	THE RING
5	8 MILE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	BANGKERO
3	THE RING

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	LORD OF THE RING
2	THE RING
3	8 MILE

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	SWIMFAN
2	BIRTHDAY GIRL
3 (DTS)	SHAOLIN SOCCER
4	LASTIKMAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	KERIDA
2	AGIMAT
3	BANGKERO

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	KERIDA
2	SHAOLIN SOCCER
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	LIKE MIKE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	LORD OF THE RING
2	HOT CHICK
3 (DTS ES)	8 MILE
4	THE RING

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571

1	VOODOO
2	8 MILE
3 (DOLBY)	HOT CHICK
4 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RING

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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1	ONE HOUR PHOTO
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	8 MILE
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
6	HOT CHICK
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
8	LASTIKMAN

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	ONE HOUR PHOTO
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
5	8 MILE
6	HALF PAST DEAD
7	HOT CHICK
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
9	TRY SEVENTEEN
10	ANALYZE THAT

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	MANO PO
2	ANALYZE THAT
3	LASTIKMAN
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
5	8 MILE
6	TRY SEVENTEEN
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
8	HOT CHICK
9	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
11	ONE HOUR PHOTO
12	HALF PAST DEAD

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	HOT CHICK
2	RING (JAPANESE)
3	8 MILE
4	8 MILE
5	TRY SEVENTEEN
6	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
7	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
9	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
10	ANALYZE THAT
11	ONE HOUR PHOTO
12	HALF PAST DEAD

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
4	8 MILE
5	RING (JAPANESE)
6	ANALYZE THAT
7	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8	HALF PAST DEAD
9	HOT CHICK
10	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
11	LASTIKMAN
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295462

1	HOT CHICK
2	RING (JAPANESE)
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	ANALYZE THAT
5	ONE HOUR PHOTO
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7	8 MILE
8	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	ANALYZE THAT
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	TRY SEVENTEEN
5	LASTIKMAN
6	HALF PAST DEAD
7	HOT CHICK
8	8 MILE
9	ONE HOUR PHOTO
	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	CHARLOTTE GRAY
2	BANGKERO
3	8 MILE
	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	KERIDA
7	VAMPS
8	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM CITY ILOILO
3208422

1	KERIDA
2	CLOSED
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
5	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7	CLOSED
8	UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	8 MILE
3	SWIMFAN
4	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5	KERIDA
6	HOT CHICK

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	THE TRY SEVENTEEN
2	8 MILE
3	RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	ANALYZE THAT

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	8 MILE
2	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
3	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
4	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS
2	UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE
3	LIKE MIKE
4	HALF PAST DEAD
5	8 MILE
6	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	HOT CHICK
2	8 MILE
3	TRY SEVENTEEN
4	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2084

1	THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2	KERIDA
3	SWIMFAN
4	HALF PAST DEAD

THE PODIUM CINEMA
633-6076

1	LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS 11:30 FS/12:00 MF/3:40/7:20/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/2:10 END
2	8 MILE 10:50 FS/11:20 MF/1:40/4:00/6:20/8:40/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:50 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 • Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 • After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS @ Robinsons Malls
call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279

THX	LORD OF THE RINGS II - 11:00 AM (MF); 2:30 PM; 6:00 PM; 9:30 PM (LMF)
2	HOT CHICK
3	ANALYZE THAT
4	ONE HOUR PHOTO
5	8 MILE
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II
7	HALF PAST DEAD
8	THE RING (US VERSION)
9	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
10	TRY SEVENTEEN

MATINEE PRICE: P80 THX cinema • P65 f level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	ONE HOUR PHOTO
4	RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5	ANALYZE THAT
6	HOT CHICK
7	8 MILE

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	LORD OF THE RINGS II
3	ANALYZE THAT
4	HOT CHICK
5	HALF PAST DEAD
6	8 MILE
7	ONE HOUR PHOTO
8	LASTIKMAN

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	HOT CHICK
4	8 MILE
5	ONE HOUR PHOTO
6	ANALYZE THAT
7	TRY SEVENTEEN
8	HALF PAST DEAD

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575

1	8 MILE
2	LORD OF THE RING II
3	HOT CHICK
4	THE RING (US VERSION)

Star Mills- Sn Fernando, Pamp
875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270

1	8 MILE
2	SWIMFAN
3	HOT CHICK
4	KERIDA
5	THE RING (US VERSION)
6	LORD OF THE RINGS II

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	HOT CHICK)
4	ANALYZE THAT
5	ONE HOUR PHOTO
6	TRY SEVENTEEN

Sta. Rosa Laguna
049-8370907

1	LORD OF THE RINGS II
2	THE RING (US VERSION)
3	8 MILE
4	BANGKERO
5	HOT CHICK

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	8 MILE
3	HALF PAST DEAD
4	SWIMFAN
5	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
6	LAPU-LAPU

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	THE RING (US VERSION)
2	HALF PAST DEAD
3	MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4	UNFAITHFUL CONCUVINE
5	DOUBLE SEDUCTION
6	KERIDA

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

‘Hero’ premiere

ONE of the Asia’s most awaited action and romance movies is coming to Philippine theaters next month.

The epic film “Hero,” directed by multi-awarded Zhang Yimou and starring martial arts superstar Jet Li, will have its premiere night on Feb. 1 (Saturday), 7:30 p.m. at SM Megamall Cinema 10.

The premiere is presented by Anvil Executive Club, the dynamic organization of young Filipino-Chinese entrepreneurs and the prime mover behind the new “Anvil Prize for Courage in Public Service.”

Produced with a budget of $31 million, “Hero” has recently been nominated as best foreign film in this year’s Golden Globe Awards in Hollywood.

Jet Li plays Nameless, a county sheriff. Cannes Film Festival best actor Tony Leung plays assassin Flying Snow, martial arts star Donnie Yen is assassin Sky and “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon” actress Zhang Ziyi plays Moon, the devoted servant of Broken Sword.

“Hero” is set during China’s warring states period 2,000 years ago, when the country was divided into seven feudal kingdoms, causing the population to suffer.

The Feb. 1 gala movie premiere coincides with the first day of the Chinese lunar New Year. On that night, Anvil Executive Club will announce its national search for nominees to its first annual “Anvil Prize for Courage in Public Service.”

For inquiries, call Anvil 726-7029 or 723-9957.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	8 MILE
Ali 2	THE RING
Ali 3	HOT CHICK
Ali 4	LOD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 5	TRY SEVENTEEN
Ali 6	ONE HOUR PHOTO
Ali 7	ANAYLYZE THAT
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
Farmers 2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
ARANETA COLISEUM	
FEB 3 & 5	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
FEB 15	LANI MISALUCHA
FEB 18	ABBA TRIBUTE CONCERT
ELEPHANT WORLD	
JAN. 28	3 PM
JAN. 29	10 AM / 3 PM
JAN. 30	10 AM / 3 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	ALIAS BOMBA QUEEN / EROTIC DIARIES
ODEON	BANGKERO
ODEON-2	PAKAWALANG PUSO / APOY SA MAGDAMAG
ROBEN	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	FRAILTY / BALLISTIC
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	THE TOUCH / BALLISTIC
CORONET B	DERAILED / BLISS FOR PLEASURE
QUEZON-1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
REMAR	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
REMAR-2	BANGKERO
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BANGKERO
B	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE LORD OF THE RING
CINEMA-2	ANALYZE THAT
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BANGKERO
CINEMA-2	KERIDA
CINEMA-3	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-6	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-7	DEKADA '70
CINEMA-8	MANO PO
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-12	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-14	HEAVEN
CINEMA-15	RING
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
Parents are strongly warned against bringing children below 13. Some scenes can offend them.
Elijah Wood
Mandy Moore
Franka Potente
Try Seventeen
PENSHOPPE
SOLAR

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

ONE HOUR PHOTO R18 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	8 MILE P13 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:35, 9:50	ANALYZE THAT P13 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10
HOT CHICK P13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	THE RING P13 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 11:30, 3:00, 6:30, 10:00

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
NOW SHOWING
DOLBY DIGITAL

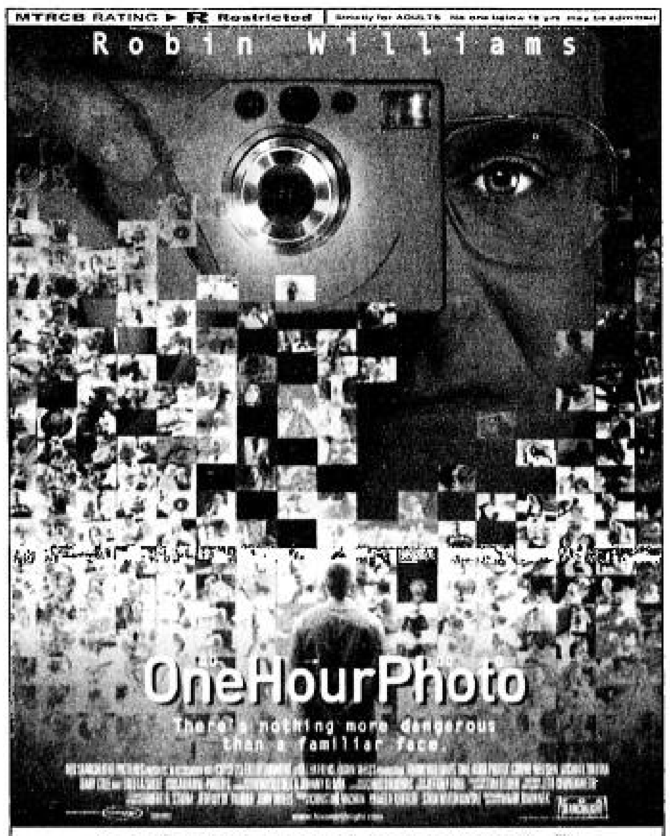
CINEMA 1
LORD OF THE RINGS 2
11:20, 2:50, 6:20, 9:50
GP

CINEMA 2
HOT CHICK
12:00, 2:10, 4:20, 6:30, 8:40
P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7234466

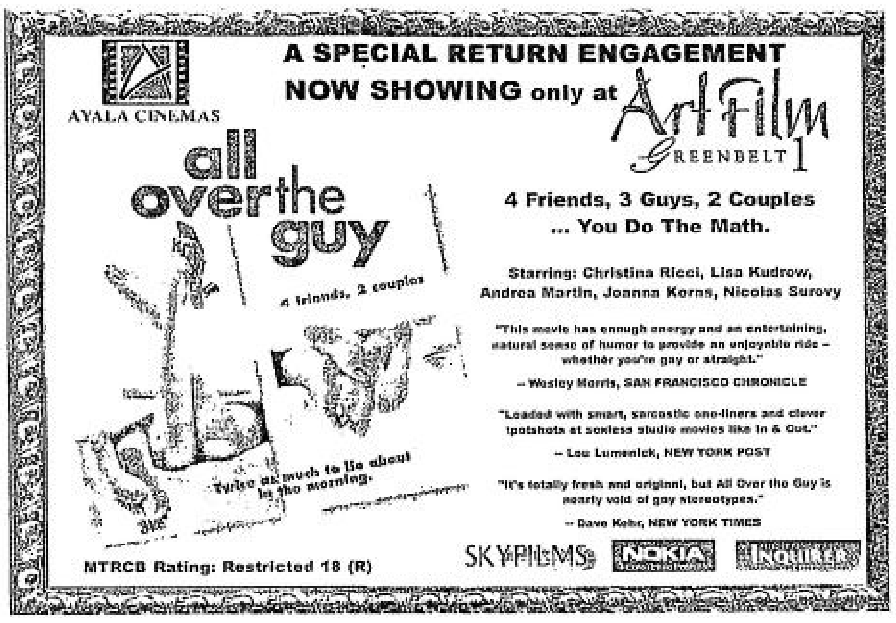
MUSIC MUSEUM
JAN 31 2003 "FEEL" - Carol Banawa 9:00 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
ADVANCE SCREENING
INVITATIONAL DWTM PREMIERE
on January 28, 2003
7:30 pm
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 3
MTRCB RATING: R18
Regular Showing on January 29, 2003 at the SM CINEMAS
From Film Auteur BRIAN DE PALMA comes the steamiest movie of the year.
She's Beautiful, Sexy and Hot.
She's also cunning, deceitful and dangerous.
"Sexy and sinful."
ANTONIO BANDERAS
REBECCA ROMIJN-STAMOS
MISSION IMPOSSIBLE
FEMME FATALE


MTRCB RATING ▸ R Restricted
Robin Williams
OneHourPhoto
There's nothing more dangerous than a familiar face.
NOW SHOWING

FREE TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND AT AYALA CINEMAS
WIN A FREE TRIP FOR TWO TO NEW ZEALAND AT AYALA CINEMAS WHEN YOU WATCH
LORD OF THE RINGS
EXPLORE THE WORLD OF MIDDLE EARTH
A JOURNEY TO NEW ZEALAND
SEE POSTERS AND LEAFLETS FOR MORE DETAILS.
Promo runs from Jan 11 to Feb 9, 2003.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0102. Series of 2003.
Special Thanks to:
PIONEER MANILA BULLETIN BUFFALO WAVE BEAT 103.5K-LITE MAGIC 89.9

AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS JAN. 29 only at ArtFilm GREENBELT 1
Off Key, aka Desafinado, is a Spanish comedy made in English featuring an international cast.
It is the story of three operatic tenors who performed all over the world together, until a disastrous performance in Mexico City, where they split for good. Now, they are getting together at the French Villa for the wedding of one of the three tenors to the daughter of another. To further complicate things, the bride's mother is married to the third trio member now. The father of the bride, who has fallen on hard times, hires a hooker to accompany him, and to help with his plot to reunite the trio as performers. The groom-to-be has a son, who isn't really his, and who secretly has the hots for the bride's mother.
Starring:
Danny Aiello, George Hamilton, Joe Mantegna
Anna Galiena & Ariadna Gil
OFF KEY
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
SKYFILMS NOKIA INQUIRER


AYALA CINEMAS
A SPECIAL RETURN ENGAGEMENT
NOW SHOWING only at ArtFilm GREENBELT 1
all over the guy
4 friends, 2 couples
Twice as much to lie about in the morning.
4 Friends, 3 Guys, 2 Couples ... You Do The Math.
Starring: Christina Ricci, Lisa Kudrow, Andrea Martin, Joanna Kerns, Nicolas Surovy
"This movie has enough energy and an entertaining, natural sense of humor to provide an enjoyable ride – whether you're gay or straight."
– Wesley Morris, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE
"Loaded with smart, sarcastic one-liners and clever potshots at sexless studio movies like In & Out."
– Lou Lumenick, NEW YORK POST
"It's totally fresh and original, but All Over the Guy is nearly void of gay stereotypes."
– Dave Kehr, NEW YORK TIMES
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)
SKYFILMS NOKIA INQUIRER

"GUSTO KONG MAG-EKSPERIMENTO..."
raymond bagatsing carlo maceda
katya santos
Sukdulan
hanggang saan ka sasabay?
hanggang kailan ka bibigay?
DIRECTED BY MAC C. ALEJANDRE
VIVA FILMS
OPENS TOMORROW!

Going digital

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

RIGHT after our piece "Make Your Own Film" came out, we received queries from people who were also thinking of using video cameras to shoot their first movie features.

They wanted to know more about the pluses and minuses of the process of converting digital video to 35 mm, finding distribution and getting their works to reach the mainstream movie audience.

Maybe these additional notes on the Independent Feature Project Market and Film Conference recently held in New York City, can help:

The consensus at the IFP conference was that digital was a good thing. It enabled young filmmakers to produce their first feature-length movies at a fraction of what they would have had to spend in Hollywood.

But filmmakers who had experience with video reminded newcomers of the additional cost of transferring their films from digital video to 33 mm for conventional theater release. Often, distributors didn't want to assume that cost, so the filmmaker would have to factor it into his total budget.

Some filmmakers worried about digital video's loss in terms of quality, but improvements were promised by people working on updated camera technology.

New directors were also reminded that digital video should be resorted to not for exclusively economical reasons. Film projects should be chosen that can benefit from digital video's flexibility, portability, and even its "limitations."

It was felt that semi-documentary and cinema verite approaches would benefit most from digital video's acutely real and non-glossy visuals.

In other words, select material that will come off even better with digital video than the standard film orientation.

An additional strength of video is the fact that it enables prospective filmmakers to learn the moviemaking ropes without spending a fortune.

The experts at the conference conceded that the main problem for new film artists continues to be distribution. How to improve your movie's chances of being picked up for mainstream distribution? Make sure you have a really good script—because, when all is said and done, it's the material, not the "technicals," that will "carry" a film.

Since mainstream release is a big problem for newcomers, people at the conference asked the experts to explore new distribution set-ups. What about opening new screening venues using satellite—downloaded digital projection (this is also being talked about in the Philippines)? What about downloading movies on the Internet? Or direct distribution to buyers on DVD?

As you can see, the filmmaking and film distribution scene is in a major state of flux these days, so more innovations will present themselves as viable alternatives in the next few years.

In the States, it was observed that more screens than ever are now dedicated to the "indie" and art-film markets, so new filmmakers have an easier time getting their movies shown.

That still isn't the case in the Philippines, but Pinoy-specific alternatives can be investigated if new directors are determined to be seen and heard and if they can get enough paying film buffs to support their pioneering endeavors.

Stars share most important lessons in love

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

SINCE Valentine's Day is just around the corner, I cornered some celebrities and asked them about the most important lesson love has taught them and the telltale that Cupid has hit their hearts bull's-eye.

As for me, no matter how old or how strong you are, you can never be exempted from love's bittersweet sting. When it hits you, embrace it with all you got, but when love wants to be let go, you got to release it.

If you loved well, love will somehow flow back to you again. It never goes to waste if it's heartfelt.

May your heart be hurt-free this V-day, my fellow romantic fools.

Tintin Bersola: We all work harder, laugh harder, cry harder and dream harder because of love. I'm in love when I still feel like a high school girl each time he looks at me and holds my hand. I know I love someone when the magic and electricity are still there, no matter how long we've been together.

Connie Sison: I learned that even as I strive to give my best and my all to my partner, I should also cherish and take care of myself. I must not lose my individuality. I'm in love when being with him is the highlight of my day, even if it's only for a brief period of time. When I really love someone, I'm willing to make the relationship work against all odds.

Joyce Jimenez: The most important lesson I learned in love is that trust is something you earn, not get.

Ogie Alcasid: Love is not just an emotion. It's a commitment. You know you're in love when you feel you can grow old with that person. You know you love someone when you do not try to change that person and you respect that person's individuality.

Riki Kwek: True love is not just seeing each other in the eyes but making sure you make the other person see the right path. I know I'm in love when I don't enjoy myself even if I'm in my favorite place with my fave people if my honey is not around.

Joey Generoso (Side A): I know I'm in love when I think of her every minute. *Para siyang linta na mahirap alisin sa utak. Nakadikit talaga.* I know I love someone already when feeling Superman *ako* that I can move mountains just to be with her. *Ganyan ako kalakas!*

Michael de Mesa: Over the years, love has taught me that we should not take advantage of one's selflessness and also to love unconditionally.

I can say I'm in love when I can't bear to be without her. I know I love someone when I make it a point to be with her 24/7 as much as possible.

Guess list

GUESS who this TV host is who snatched away the businessman live-in partner of a perky and pretty newscaster. Looks like she has a penchant for ensnaring attached men because she was also the cause of the break-up of a comedian and a dramatic actress a few years ago.

Maybe she thrives on spice and challenge. I'm no moralist but the funny thing is she tries to project a squeaky clean image. If there's anything that squeaks, it's her being a great pretender. When the newscaster bumps into her, she's obviously uncomfortable.

The more you try to hide something, the more obvious it becomes. What is appalling is that she's still seeing the comedian on the side.

I wonder how the businessman will take it as soon as he gets wind of it. Guess that serves as his karma for leaving the newscaster who's such a decent girl and was so loyal to him all the years they were together.

Of course, going astray is not unheard of especially in the topsy-turvy show biz scene. But what makes it really dirty and ugly is the way some people keep doing a Pontius Pilate. Why can't they just be honest about their dishonesty?

Guess who this matinee idol is who lost a multi-million product endorsement contract because he was caught taking drugs in the bathroom during a lull in the shooting. Such audacity! He could not even wait for the shoot to be over and done with, huh?

That's how much of a junkie he is. Everything else he worked hard for will turn into junk if he does not clean up his act soon.

Change of mind

AFTER I came out last week with my exposé about **Marivic Marquez**'s grievances towards her stepchildren **Joey** and **Melanie Marquez**, I got a call from Melanie's camp.

I really meant to get her side, but when I badgered her for an interview, she changed her mind.

Why the sudden shift? I meant no harm in airing Marivic's side that's why I found it quite ridiculous when Melanie was quoted in a tabloid that she doesn't know the whole story.

As they say, there are always two sides and my column is always open to both. There are some things which are not to be taken seriously.

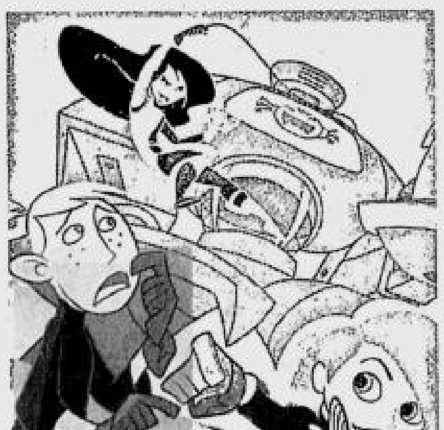
As a writer, you can either unearth facts or bury the lies with words.

Personal

HAPPY brthday to my friend **Richie Coronel Santos**, the prince of his family's Cinderella chain of fashion specialty stores.

Birthday kisses to my guardian angel **Rissa Carpio**.

For feedback, e-mail friends at dsquare@yahoo.com or jaimealsan@yahoo.com



NEW animated adventure series, "Kim Possible."

Disney Channel airs new animated series

IT MAY seem impossible, but the everyday adventures of an all-American teenage girl include rescuing the kidnapped son of a billionaire Japanese electronics mogul, finding a missing nuclear arsenal in a breakway Soviet republic and solving world weather patterns mysteriously reversing overnight.

Who's that ordinary young lady solving all these crimes and more?

It's varsity cheerleader Kim Possible, the lead character of Disney Channel's new animated adventure series of the same title, which airs Saturdays and Sundays, 6:30 p.m.

It all started innocently enough with Kim's webpage ad that states "She can do anything." Well, it meant that she can do stuff like babysitting and watering neighbor's plants. But a weird thing happens. The website got hits from people in trouble from around the world.

Challenged by the prospect of living an adventurous life, Kim tried answering the inquiries and started to battle out evil characters such as Ubel Drakken, Steel Toe, Shego, The Killer B's, Doctor Botox, Duff Killgan, Lord Monkey Fist, Señor Senior Senior and Señor Junior, who are out to rule the world.

Kim's a natural in action, handling the direst predicaments with cool aplomb. And even more amazing are her observational and deductives skills. With these, Kim can crack the most elusive of mysteries.

But Kim's fame, accomplishments and confidence seem to evaporate when she enters the classrooms and corridors of Middleton High School.

There, in addition to her amazing extra-curricular exploits, Kim has to face the same knotty social hurdles as any other high school student: the rival cheerleader, the mean teacher, the hunk who doesn't know she's alive and persistent suitors.

"Kim Possible" premiered on Disney Channel Asia last December.

The fun and excitement doubled when Disney Channel Philippines gave Kim a rousing welcome, Filipino-style, with the exciting "Kim Possible Mission Launch," held at Rockwell's Power Plant Mall in Makati.

MUTYA NG NAVOTAS
Loise Rae Naval of Barangay Danghari (center) was crowned Mutya ng Navotas in a recent pageant that served as one of the highlights of the week-long celebration of the 97th "Araw ng Navotas." Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco (left) and Rep. Ricky Sandoval (right) graced the event. Other winners are (from left) Gretchen Macia of Brgy. Sipac-Almacen, fourth runner-up; Lea Molato of NBBS, third runner-up; Michaela Pestaño of Brgy. San Jose, second runner-up; and Gemalyn de la Cruz of Brgy. Tangos, first runner-up. Theme of this year's celebration was "Sama-Sama, Tulong-Tulong, Patuloy ang Pagsulong."

"IT'S RAINING HUNKS." Repeat performance.

Second serving of The Hunks

SHOWS

JERICHO Rosales, Diether Ocampo, Piolo Pascual, Bernard Palanca and Carlos Agassi mount a repeat of their sing-and-dance act, "It's Raining Hunks," at Casino Filipino Parañaque for a special post-Valentine's Day show on Feb. 15.

This time, The Hunks will share the stage with sexy actress-comedienne Rufa Mae Quinto.

"It's Raining Hunks 2" is mounted by Live Artist Production, the same outfit behind the success of the recent "Showgirls" dance revue and the "Best of Stylistics" concert last December.

Jericho, Piolo, Diether, Bernard and Carlos took time out from their busy schedules to make "It's Raining Hunks 2" possible. The Hunks co-host ABS-CBN's Sunday noontime variety show "Asap," in addition to their individual movie and TV assignments. They are also preparing for concert tours abroad.

Call Live Artist Production at 920-2643 and 0918-9221542 or SM Ticketnet at 911-5555.

Lou at Tavern

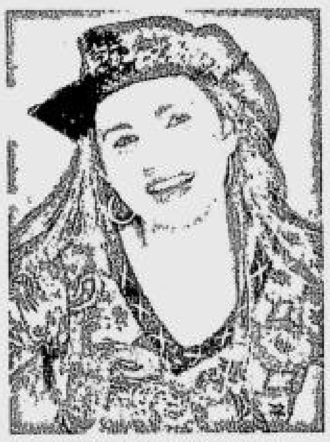
POP-ROCK artist Lou Bonnevie holds a special concert, "Back 2 U: Lou @ Tavern," 9:30 p.m. on Feb. 1 at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3, Makati City.

Lou will be joined by her celebrity-friends in the show, which promises a musical journey from the '70s with some blues and rock numbers, the '80s from The Motels, Kim Carnes and Eurythmics to the current hits of The Corrs, Avril Lavigne and Mandy Moore.

Lou will also sing her original hits like "Simpleng Babae" and "Tisay."

Music lovers will always remember Lou as one of the few female performers who can come up with the same intensity in both vocal prowess and performance. "Back 2 U: Lou @ Tavern" is presented by PLDT, with support from Heineken.

For tickets, call Tavern at 757-4484 to 85 or Dimitri Productions at 897-6991.



BONNEVIE. To be joined by celebrity-friends onstage.

Media supporters include 99.5 RT, Monster Radio RX 93.1, Magic 89.9 dwTM, NU 107 and Joey @ 92.3 Rhythms.

Musical delight

MERK'S Bar Bistro at Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati, presents exciting nights of pure musical delight.

Silk and Steel sings all time hits on Mondays, with Helen Burdeos on vocals, Renato "Nato" Llamas on rhythm guitar and Alfredo "Koko" Marbella on bass and lead.

The group dishes out popular tunes by James Taylor, Cat Stevens, Kenny Rankin, Carole King, Don McLean and The Bread.

Acoustic Jive will provide the main attraction on Tuesdays.

Verni Varga performs in a special "Jazz and Groove" series, which starts Wednesday, Jan. 29.

On regular Wednesdays, Richard Merk and Friends perform in "Jazz Nights," with special guest Eileen Sison.

Thursdays will feature a special "Up Close and Intimate" series, with violinist John Lesaca.

Mae Romero plays during the happy hours on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Saturdays will be electrifying as Mai Castro and Onda Latina Band bring their Latin wave music to Merk's.

For reservations, call 757-4720 or 757-4721.

GALA PREMIER
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TIME : 7:30 P.M.
VENUE : CINEMAS 1 & 2
hugh GRANT
sandra BULLOCK
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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Two decades of Gary V

By Remy M. Umerez
Contributor

HOW DOES Gary Valenciano celebrate his 20th year in show business?

In 20 different ways.

But first, how does it feel to be at the top in a very competitive business for two decades, and despite his much-publicized endless struggle with diabetes?

"Simply amazing and I cannot believe that I lasted twenty years," Mr. Pure Energy said in a recent press lunch. "It is a wonderful blessing being able to do what I love most. I can still dance a bit and write music. Every day in the past 20 years has been like a brand new day."

Recording more albums and performing in concerts top the list of 20 projects Gary wants to accomplish this year and next.

'Beyond Words'

Gary opened the Year of the Ram with the album "Beyond Words (The Music of Gary V)," a compilation of instrumental versions of Gary's compositions, some of which never found their way to the play list of radio stations, songs that were launched from studio recording sessions and forged into public awareness during Gary V's live performances.

Released by Universal Records, it is very un-Gary V since the music and the sound come from other musicians and arrangers.

"Beyond Words" includes three winners of the Ten Outstanding Young Men awards —pianist Raul Sunico, flutist Tony Maique and Gary V himself who won the TOYM in 2000.

The album also features noted musician Michael Shapiro who is the husband of Kevin Lettau, sax man Tots Tolentino, violinist Jay Cayuca, Eddie Katindig, Mel Villena, Cesar Aguas, Mon Faustino who all add a new twist to the music of Gary V.

The Parliament Syndicate band gives "Shout for Joy" a hip hop beat. Cellist Renato Lucas carries the melody in Brian Cua's soft pop arrangement of "Sana Maulit Muli."

Vocalists Mon Faustino and Zebedee Zuniga provide an a capella treatment of "Eto Na Naman" complete with 52 tracks of intricate harmonies and vocal percussive effects.

Classical flutist Tony Maigue goes to town with South Border man Jay Durias' faux jazz arrangement of "Di Bale na Lang."

Movie themes

Eddie K pounds the vibes on Romy Posadas' Latin jazz arrangement of "Wag Mo na Sanang Isipin."

And Gary V himself plays the keyboards in his own un-recorded composition "Victory," a symphonic, anthemic romp with Perf de Castro on guitars and L.A.-based Mike Shapiro on drums.

There are plans for Gary to do an album of movie themes. "Every now and then, fans would ask whether a particular movie theme is included in a new album and when I say no, I sensed disappointment on their faces," Gary said. "I thought it is about time that I did a compilation of songs I've sung in movies, which would date back to my 'bagets' days. Viva has agreed to provide me the master tape of the song 'Kaputol ng Isang Awit'."

The list of songs for that album will include the themes from the movies "Anak," "Nine Mornings," "Kailangan Kita," "Mano Po" and the forthcoming "Magnifico."

Staying grounded

Gary won't be at home to celebrate Valentine's Day. He'll be in Canada to perform in Toronto on Feb. 15 and Winnipeg on Feb. 16. His international tour actually begins on Feb. 9 with a show in Los Angeles. He takes a break for about a month to take up a course in sound engineering in Orlando.

This month, Gary is busy with free concerts in the provinces, which starts in Cadiz, Negros, while his campus tours begins in La Salle Greenhills on Jan. 31. He hopes to cover 20 campuses this year.

The rest of the year is filled with a 10-night series of shows at the Music Museum in August, inspirational concerts, a Gary V book (not of the coffee-table kind), a concert series collection, a re-launch of his website www.GaryV.com and a concert with the Philharmonic Orchestra for the benefit of diabetics whose existence Gary considers a miracle and an act of God. Gary is himself a famous diabetic.

If Regine Velasquez has Michel Legrand, who would it be for Gary V?

Celine Dion is his quick reply.

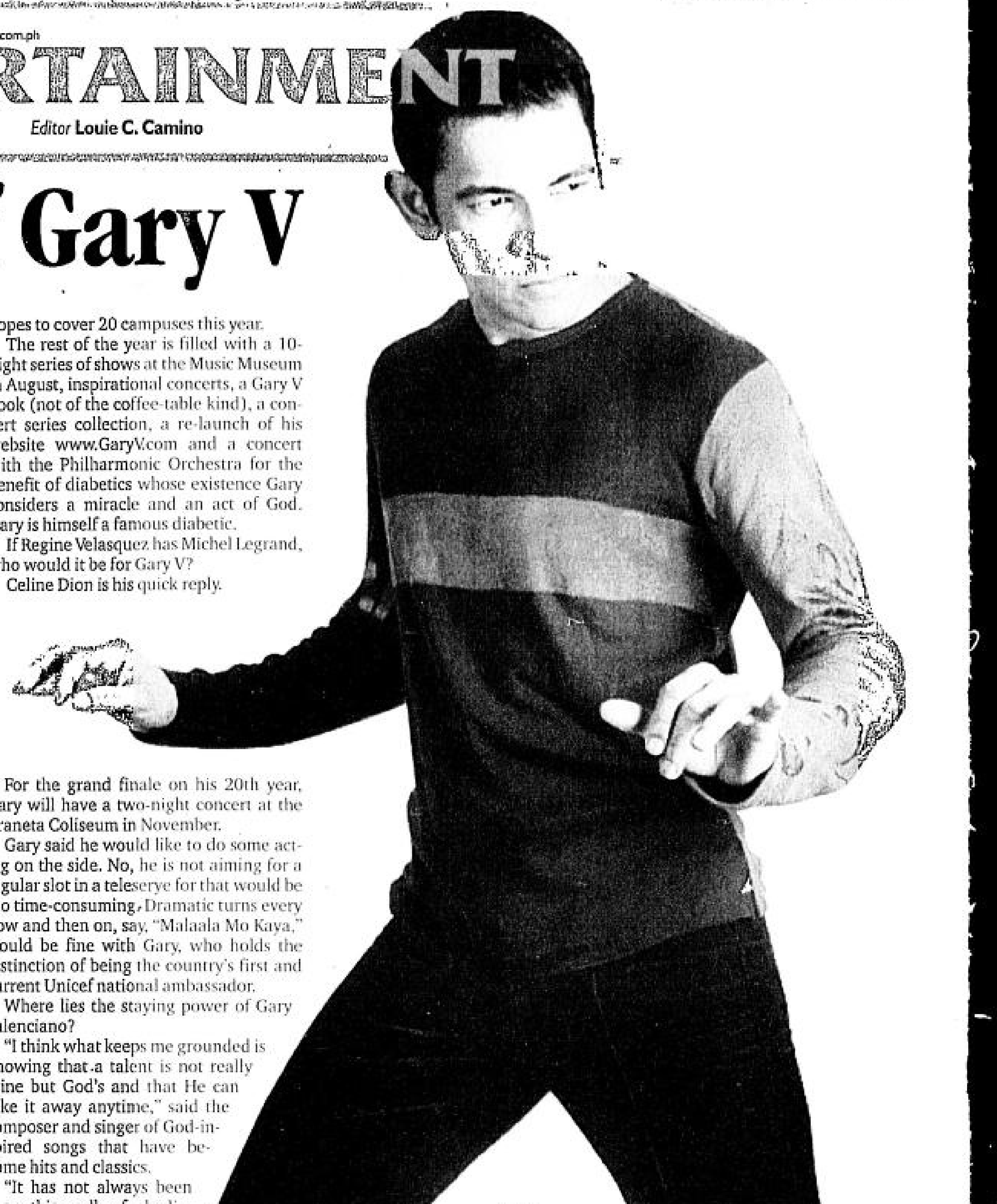
For the grand finale on his 20th year, Gary will have a two-night concert at the Araneta Coliseum in November.

Gary said he would like to do some acting on the side. No, he is not aiming for a regular slot in a teleserye for that would be too time-consuming. Dramatic turns every now and then on, say, "Malaala Mo Kaya," would be fine with Gary, who holds the distinction of being the country's first and current Unicef national ambassador.

Where lies the staying power of Gary Valenciano?

"I think what keeps me grounded is knowing that a talent is not really mine but God's and that He can take it away anytime," said the composer and singer of God-inspired songs that have become hits and classics.

"It has not always been easy, this walk of obedience, but when I fall, I come to Him and it is good to know that I am forgiven."



MAN OF THE YEAR.
Gary V has a new album, will be busy with performances here and abroad, and is ready to take on acting roles on TV, too.

Lani M heats up Sinulog

MANY VOICES are heard by the Cebu audience from Lani Misalucha in her "Crossover Live" tour.

By Marinel R. Cruz

FOR MANY Cebuanos as well as tourists, the Sinulog earlier this month was memorable because they sang with Lani Misalucha on the eve of the festival. Or at least they joined her in singing Mandy Moore's "Only Hope," during her two-hour show at the Waterfront Hotel in the southern city's Lahug district.

Musical director Louie Ocampo did the arrangement of Lani's version of the heart-wrenching song.

Unlike in the shows of other artists, no Cebu band did the opening act for Lani's concert. Instead, Lani had Ogie Alcasid and Martin Nievera as guests.

The Cebu show, the second leg of her "Crossover Live" tour, used the core of her 2002 Araneta Coliseum concert, with new songs added like Moore's hit.

"I had to learn new songs that would appeal to the younger Cebu audience," Lani told the INQUIRER after the show.

After two more numbers—Dionne Warwick's "I'll Never Love This Way Again" and Taylor Dayne's "Love Will Lead You Back"—Lani gave way to Ogie, who did an excellent job of making the crowd sing, dance and laugh. For a minute there, we forgot that it was Lani's show and not Ogie's "OA sa Hits."

Ogie sang a mixture of jumpy and slow tunes like "Sumayaw Sumunod," "Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw" and Vanessa Amorosi's "Absolutely Everybody." During his first set which lasted for 10 minutes, he also sang "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang?" with Lani.

Ogie wrote and recorded "Bakit" almost a decade ago, but it was only after Freestyle revived the sad but soothing song that it became a hit.

In the second part of the show, Lani sang tunes from the '80s. As in her Manila shows, she did some opera songs, too.

Her powerful voice soared and reverberated through the walls of the 3,000-seater grand ballroom of the Waterfront Hotel.

The crowd was zapped out of their dreamy state when Lani sang her version of "Laklak," an ode to booze that was originally done by the alternative group the Teeth.

"We try to make each of Lani's songs a highlight of the show," said Louie O. "I think that for a known balladeer like Lani to sing an alternative tune like 'Laklak' is a totally unique experience for the audience."

After "Laklak," Ogie returned and did more upbeat numbers. Lani then dished out slow tunes like "You Don't Have to Say You Love Me," and the Louie O composition "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin."

Louie O first wrote "Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin" for his former girlfriend Joey Albert. He rearranged it for Martin and, last year, for Lani's "Crossover Live" shows.

Lani's cohosting of the weekly noontime TV show "SOP" must have helped her in speaking in front of a big audience. She is now more confident with her spiels.

Lani's duet with Martin, who was her surprise guest that night, drew out the most deafening screams from the audience. The two made the crowd fall in love with their version of the Josh Groban and Charlotte Church original, "The Prayer."

For her encore, Lani had the crowd rolling in the aisles with her uncanny, on-target impersonation of Pilita Corales ("A Million Thanks to You," complete with the back-breaking movements), Kuh Ledesma ("Till I Met You"), Zsa Zsa Padilla ("Hiram"), Jaya (""Bakit Nga Ba?"), Sharon Cuneta ("Sana'y Wala ng Wakas") and Regine Velasquez ("On the Wings of Love").

Lani's "Crossover Live" tour earlier took her to Bacolod, Davao and Pampanga. It will be capped by a major concert at the Araneta Coliseum on Feb. 8. Rowell Santiago directs the tour.

Lani is set fly to the US in April for a series of shows. She will also release a new album of mostly OPM tracks, from Viva.

SURPRISE GUEST. Martin Nievera joins Lani onstage.

EXCELLENT JOB. Guest Ogie Alcasid makes the Cebu crowd sing, dance and laugh.

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BIR toughens stance on excise tax breaks

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue is set to issue this week two revenue regulations that will tighten the excise tax exemption privilege given to 10-seater vehicles and lift the tax breaks accorded to airlines for their jet fuel purchases.

These measures are expected to plug revenue leaks that cost the government at least P2.5 billion yearly.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said the BIR had already completed the draft regulation that would govern the excise tax exemption accorded to 10-seater vehicles. He added that the measure was now awaiting the signature of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

"We are also coming up with a regulation lifting the exemption of imported jet fuels from payment of excise taxes. The regulation, which is to be completed this week, will effectively reverse numerous exemptions given to airline companies with Congressional franchises," said Parayno.

Camacho, for his part, said he would sign the regulations as soon as he received them. "I am just waiting for the BIR to finish them and I will sign them right away."

The BIR's move to tighten the excise tax exemption of 10-seater vehicles will come ahead of the proposed legislation that seeks to withdraw the exemption and shift the basis of automobile taxation to the value of the vehicles from fuel type and engine displacement. Once passed and enacted, the law will supersede the BIR ruling.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said the government lost P1.5 billion in revenues last year from the excise tax exemption given to Honda CR-V after it was reclassified by the Department of Trade and Industry as an Asian Utility Vehicle.

The excise tax exemption enjoyed by the airlines on their imported jet fuel purchases used for local routes was estimated to have deprived the government of P1 billion in revenue yearly.

Parayno said the draft regulation on 10-seaters would reverse the exemption given to Honda CR-V. But the BIR would allow the assembler to keep the tax break on existing inventory .

"We avoid issuing regulations that could lead to financial difficulties on the part of specific players," said the BIR chief.

Honda released a two-wheel drive CR-V in April 2002 that was passed on as a 10-seater and thus, was exempted from the excise tax. The BIR, however, re-measured the Honda CR-V in June and found that it could not seat 10 people.

The excise tax exemption given to 10-seater vehicles was introduced by the BIR in 1997 and was modified in 1999. This incentive was given only to the so-called AUVs (Asian Utility Vehicles) or those with local content of at least 60 percent.

Parayno said the new order would be similar to the 1997 regulation except for some

BIR/ B2

GMA OKs Transco privatization plan

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACAÑANG has approved the privatization plan for the country's transmission system, which would pave the way for industry-wide reforms, the energy department said yesterday.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said President Macapagal-Arroyo gave her go-ahead even as she expressed disappointment over the delay in the Senate's action on a bill giving the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) a franchise that could readily be assigned to a concessionaire.

"The President sees the importance and the urgency of the privatization of the (transmission system)," Perez said. "Something must be done to stop the continuous bleeding of the government coffers due to the financial losses of National Power Corp."

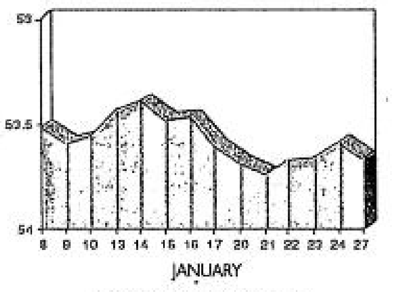
Transco was spun off from Napocor when the Electric Power Industry Reform Act in June 2001.

The energy chief said the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm) yesterday launched the privatization through the local and international publication of invitations to bid.

Last week, Psalm president Edgardo del Fonso explained that the privatization would be done in two phases, with the first one covering a concession to operate, maintain, rehabilitate, expand and finance the nationwide high voltage transmission grid.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JANUARY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P53.67 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 27, 2003

¥117.82 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 27, 2003

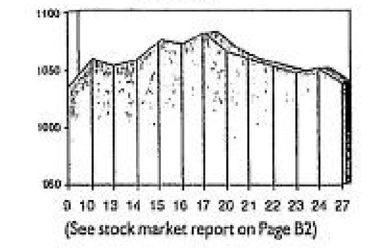
GOLD: $372.50-373.25

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 27,2003

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

DECEMBER



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares down on war jitters, IMF downgrade

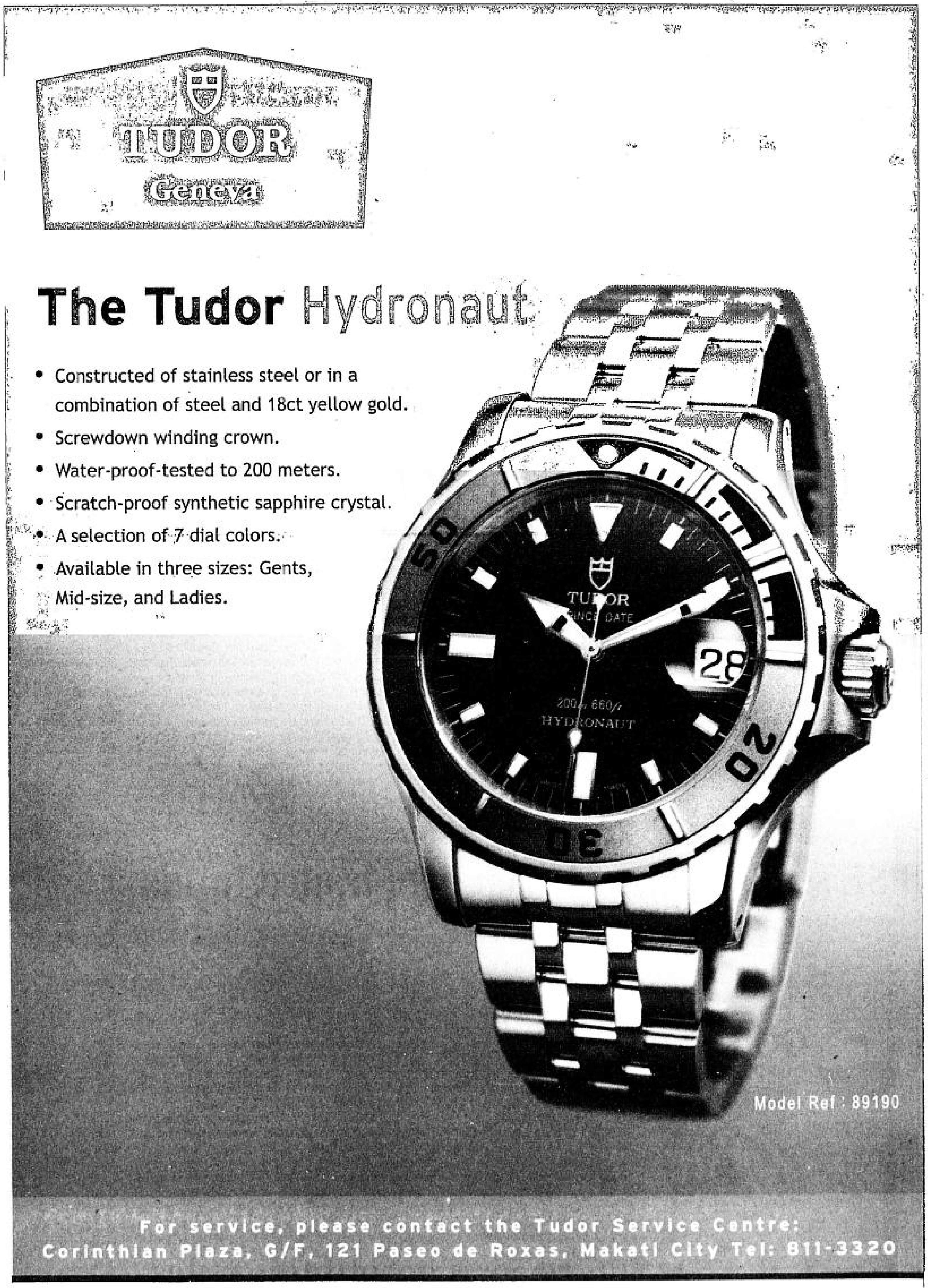
SHARES closed lower yesterday, in step with other regional markets, as investor sentiment continued to deteriorate in the face of a looming US-led war in Iraq, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 11.75 points, or 1.1 percent, at 10‶3.67, after rising 0.2 percent Friday.

Losses incurred by select blue chips weighed on the market. Manila Electric B fell P0.50, or 4 percent, at P12 on profit taking.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. gave up P10, or 3.2 percent, to P305, after the company's American Depositary Receipts in New York shed 1.1 percent Friday.

"The market's decline was due to the weakness in regional markets brought about by Wall Street's decline Friday due to concerns on Iraq," Citiseconline.com investment analyst Mark Alan Canizares told Dow Jones Newswires. *AP*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-Upper G/F, SM City, Iloilo City

GREENHILLS WATCH CENTER
-G/F, Virra Mall,
Greenhills Shopping Center

HOUR GLASS CENTER
-Level 2, Mega A, SM Megamall

LUCERNE JEWELLERS
-G/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center
-Level 2, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
-Level 2, Mega B, SM Megamall
-Level 2, Expansion Mall,
Alabang Town Center
-G/F, Ayala Center, Cebu

MULTI-TIME EMPORIUM
-G/F, SM City, North Edsa, Q.C.

RUSTAN'S SILVER VAULT
-Rustan's Makati, Ayala Center

TIME TREND CENTER
-Upper G/F, Mega B,
SM Megamall
-Ground Level, SM City, Manila

WASHINGTON JEWELRY EMPORIUM
-Level 3, Mega B, SM Megamall
-Lower G/F, SM City, Manila
-G/F, SM City, North Edsa, Q.C.
-North Mall, Alabang Town Center
-G/F, All Mall
-G/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center
-G/F, Harrison Plaza

WASHINGTON WATCHES & JEWELRIES
-G/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
-Level R1, Power Plant Mall
Rockwell Center

Over my dead buddy

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WHO knows, maybe something good may still come out of this official state visit by the Sultan of Brunei, Hassanal Bolkiah.

We have to assume that we can get something out of it. After all, this cute administration is spending for the visit. We look at it as representation expense.

For his part, the Sultan does not go around the world just to show off his toy, which happens to be an airplane the size of a little SM mall.

In business, nobody even dares to suggest that the visit may have anything to do with, er, "employment" of fair-skinned Filipina beauties in Brunei.

That may mean a lot of dollar earnings for the country. It also gives additional income to certain movie people—tax free, at that, or even VAT-free!

* * *

STILL, the days of the Brunei beauties are gone. Their staunchest supporter, i.e. customer, who stayed in Forbes Park, is now bankrupt.

It is also only a coincidence, based on word going around in movieland, the movie star who turned "Brunei beauties" into a household term, is finally getting married.

In Manila, anyway, the Sultan of Brunei is not famous for his aviation skills. He is known for something we have little of—which is of course a mountain of money.

Bolkiah, it is hoped in business circles, is on a shopping trip. He must be looking for something to spend his money on, such as the assets foreclosed by the banks.

My info is, Bolkiah is willing to invest a lot of money here. Only now he is careful in choosing projects. He wants those which can help us move forward. Amen.

* * *

KNOWN to invest here through Carlos "Sonny" Dominguez, the Sultan must have in mind for the visit more than just state business. It must be business "business."

This cute administration, for sometime now, is trying to convince the Sultan to invest here. At one time, he even reportedly asks what the country needs most.

The good news is, from what I hear, polo clubs and golf clubs or even yacht clubs and private air strips are out of the picture.

Bolkiah is looking at some projects which this cute administration is dying to do but does not have the money to do them.

In other words, they must be cooking some infrastructure projects. Everybody's wish is, they will kill if only to have any of the projects near their property.

* * *

NOW the killing of Romulo Kintanar, former NPA chief, had nothing to do with any infrastructure project for the rich and famous.

His former comrades in the underground movement already owned to the killing, meaning, it was really just an execution, CPP-NPA style.

Today the CPP is a legitimate organization. It is no longer a crime, under the laws of this republic, to be a member of the "party."

And so I have a little problem here. Can our government just allow them to go around killing people? For the "murder" of Kintanar, who does our government arrest?

* * *

YOU see, I worry over those little things, because I worry about the reports on my long-time buddy, Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao, the present chief of staff of Gloriaetta.

Bobi is reportedly also in the hit list of the CPP-NPA. For what? Maybe Bobi is guilty of choosing to work hard to support his family.

Up to now, Bobi does not live comfortably. When he finds time to meet with us, his colleagues from the defunct Business Day, we even pay for his drinks. Grudgingly!

If it's true that the CPP-NPA is after him, I honestly believe it is a sign of desperation. I cannot imagine why anybody would want our dear old buddy dead.

* * *

THIS cute administration, according to Presidential Adviser On Whatever It Is He Advises The President Dodi Limcauco, really has a population program.

And that is ... well, "responsible parenting." What on Porfirio's name does it mean? If you cannot feed nine children, just please don't f..k. Is that it?

I don't know if we can call it a program. It is more of a "wish" than it is anything else. We grew up believing that a government program has something called a budget.

People don't buy contraceptives, simply because they don't have the money for those. They don't buy condom. It is expensive. They would rather buy food. Or gin!

Yet in business, they have been egging the government for a real population program. I just don't know why they never put their money where their big mouth is.

Me, I'm trying to convince a producer of consumer goods to give away free condoms this Valentine's Day. You will not burn in hell. Promise!

* * *

DANTE Liban, director general of the little known Tesda, or the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, is up against a syndicate in his own backyard.

Their racket is the usual government clearance. This is funny but it's true. Tesda, and no other government agency, issues the clearance for performing artists.

Based on its name, Tesda's function has something to do with the development of technical skills. What's "technical" about the performing arts, I have yet to figure out.

Anyway, if you wish to find a job as a dancer or a singer in Japan, you go to Tesda for clearance. Of course you have to dance and sing with the Tesda syndicate.

* * *

LIBAN wants to stop the racket. Thus, he wants Tesda to rid of this clearance BS, because the government does not earn much from it, anyway.

Last year, for example, Tesda processed nearly 250,000 applicants. At a fee of P1,000 per applicant, the government gets a total of P250,000.

For the salary of the personnel assigned to do all the paperwork alone, Tesda must be losing a lot of money in the rack ... este, activity. *Lugi pa.*

In comparison, for a little "consideration," amounting anywhere from P20,000 to P30,000 per application, the Tesda syndicate can arrange the clearance.

That's a little sideline of at least P4 billion every year. And all because the government requires "artists" to secure a piece of paper to show they can sing.

Come on, in my time, we found out just how good a guy sings by actually hearing him sing. These guys in Tesda probably never heard of audition.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, January 27, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	41,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	3,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	36	36	35.5	35.5	165,500
China Banking Corp.	630	630	630	630	200
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26	25.5	25.5	76,200
First E-Bank Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.58	120,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	30	29.5	30	249,600
Phil. Savings Bank	28	28	26.5	28	38,500
Security Bank Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10.25	16,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.5	19,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	50,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1200	1200	1200	1200	3,020
Sun Life Financial Serv.	970	995	970	995	730
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	5,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.44	0.42	0.43	1,430,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	495	497.5	495	497.5	3,900
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	4,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	600,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	5,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	60,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	310	310	305	305	48,690
Ivantage Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	450,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	28,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.6	8.7	8.6	8.7	27,000
Manila Electric Co. B	12	12	11.75	12	1,288,100
Petron Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.6	1.6	507,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	70,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	387,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.42	2.42	2.42	2.42	50,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2.3	2.34	2.3	2.34	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	160,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	168,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34.5	34.5	34	34	12,300
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	50,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	30,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57	57	57	50,700
San Miguel Corp. B	63.5	63.5	63	63	155,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.3	4.35	4.3	4.3	1,220,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	600,000
APC Group Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	200,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	40,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	5,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	2,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.145	0.135	0.145	4,360,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	1,020,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	9.1	9.1	9	9	213,000
Ionics Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	220,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	374,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	2,450,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.1	0.1	150,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.155	1,310,000
Music Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.095	0.095	300,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	300,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	300,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	600,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.6	0.61	0.6	0.61	130,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	3,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	740,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	20,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.41	0.42	1,580,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4	4	4	4,000,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.5	302,500
Jollibee Warrants	16.25	16.25	16	16.25	33,200
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	2,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
WGA - Preferred	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.5	7.8	7.5	7.8	46,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.95	5	2,067,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	100,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	1,610,000
SM Development Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	201,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	898,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	850,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	2,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	1,500,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	570,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	490,000
OIL					
Vulcan Ind'l	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	30,000

DISCLOSURES

WILLIAM, Gothong & Aboitiz Inc. denied having any information that could explain the increases in its share price initially from P1.50 to P2.24, and later to P3.35.

* * *

UNIONBANK declared cash dividends of P0.50 per share.

* * *

BANCO Filipino Savings & Mortgage Bank announced the promotion of the following: Francisco Rivera from senior vice president to executive vice president; Ramon Arcenas from vice president to senior vice president and Luis Rosales from assistant vice president to vice president.

* * *

THE BOARD of Zeus Holdings Inc. appointed Daisy Parker as compliance officer of the company pursuant to its manual of corporate governance.

* * *

SESENIO Lim was designated compliance officer of Filsyn Corp.

* * *

BANKARD Inc. announced the resignation of Ryo Narumai as director of the company.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

LISTED COMPANIES

PSE readies new M&A rules

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is set to introduce new guidelines governing mergers and acquisitions of listed companies in a bid to ensure fair treatment of all affected shareholders, particularly the minority shareholders.

Based on the draft guidelines released by the PSE yesterday, the rule will apply on companies or individuals acting in concert that are directly or indirectly acquiring more than 35 percent of another company through single or creeping transactions within a period of 12 months from the initial disclosure.

The draft PSE rules require the acquirer to provide mechanisms that will safeguard the interests of existing stockholders through any or a combination of the following:

- A general offer to the holders of each class of equity share, whether the class carries voting rights or not, whose terms must be fair and reasonable.
- A voluntary offer to exchange shares held by existing stockholders with other securities or instruments, provided that the consideration is fair and reasonable vis-à-vis what the acquirer will get and that such a mechanism is approved by a majority vote of the minority stockholders present or represented in a special meeting.
- Any other method which the acquirer may deem appropriate to safeguard the interest of the existing stockholders, as long as the method is approved by a majority vote of minority stockholders present or represented in a special meeting.

The PSE, however, may waive the requirement of a general offer in special circumstances such as when the company is the subject of rehabilitation, bankruptcy or any other similar proceedings without prejudice to the provisions of its delisting rules.

Under the proposed rule, all transactions are to be treated like an initial listing application, but any issuer may request for a pre-filing conference with the PSE to ascertain whether such rule is applicable to its specific transaction.

"This rule further seeks to achieve fair treatment by mandating timely disclosure of information to enable shareholders to make a decision on the merits of a general offer," the PSE said.

The rules also provide that parties to the transaction must first secure a pre-clearance of its chosen acquisition method with the PSE prior to implementation.

The PSE said the trading of shares of a listed company should be stopped for one hour upon announcement or disclosure of any information leading to a merger or acquisition. Another one-hour trading halt should be implemented upon dissemination of the comprehensive corporate disclosure on the transaction, which is required for submission within five trading days from the initial disclosure.

PSE seeks listing of exchange-traded funds

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is in talks with Sun Life Asset Management Co. Inc. on the possible listing of the company's exchange-traded funds (ETFs), another product innovation being considered by the bourse.

In a circular to brokers yesterday, PSE president Ernest Leung said, however, that he would like to assess the market's interest first on ETF trading before proceeding with the exercise.

ETFs are open-ended funds that track indexes or sectoral baskets of securities that are listed and traded on stock exchanges. Investors may diversify their portfolios by investing in a single unit of ETF which conveys ownership of a group of securities.

These instruments are designed to correspond to the price and yield performance of their underlying indexes, either broad stock market or stock industry sector.

"SLAMC's ETF seeks investment in highly liquid stocks included in the Philippine Stock Exchange Composite Index," Leung said.

"In this regard, trading participants are invited to indicate in the attached survey form their interest and if possible, the expected magnitude of initial subscription," Leung said.

SLAMC signed last November a deal with the PSE for the distribution of mutual funds. It also plans to list its mutual funds on the local bourse sometime this year.

Leung had said that the PSE would like to broaden its product offerings to give small investors more options. Aside from the listing of mutual funds, the PSE wants to open its doors to ETFs.

"All these things now should be looked at particularly in the context of what is happening now to many of our citizens," Leung said, referring to the proliferation of investment fiasco such as pyramiding scams.

"This is part of our program—to do the trading of exchange-traded funds. We will open up. The listing rules will allow for that," Leung said.

"The exchange-traded fund is a subset often linked to indices. You put money in stocks that comprise the index. This liquidity is linked to the core of the index. You look for stocks that are easy to sell and buy," Leung said.

Doris C. Dumlao

GOLFERS
CLUB SHARES, INC.
SEC LICENSE # A 1998-2129
AS OF JAN. 27, 2003

	SELLING	BUYING
1. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"	1,400,000	1,390,000
2. ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"	1,500,000	1,350,000
3. BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	650,000	600,000
4. CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	80,000	
5. CAMP JOHN HAY	280,000	220,000
6. CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	500,000	
7. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	120,000	100,000
8. CELEBRITY CLUB	180,000	170,000
9. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	380,000	340,000
10. CLUB FILIPINO	190,000	140,000
11. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	
12. EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	300,000	260,000
13. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	100,000	
14. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200,000	
15. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	250,000	
16. FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	350,000	
17. LUISITA GOLF CLUB	350,000	
18. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	250,000	230,000
19. MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	270,000	250,000
20. MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	11,000,000	10,500,000
21. MANILA GOLF CLUB (CORP)	13,000,000	
22. MANILA POLO CLUB	2,600,000	2,400,000
23. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	580,000	475,000
24. MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"		650,000
25. METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	100,000	
26. METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	150,000	100,000
27. MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND.)	350,000	
28. ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A" "B" "C"	Pls call	Pls call
29. QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	220,000	200,000
30. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	180,000	160,000
31. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	210,000	
32. RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	300,000	300,000
33. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"		1,400,000
34. SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND.)	200,000	
35. TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	850,000	800,000
36. TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	750,000	700,000
37. VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	150,000	150,000
38. VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	290,000	280,000
39. WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	8,200,000	

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SEC reviews accounting rules

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC), in an effort to follow International Accounting Standards (IAS), is currently reviewing its Special Accounting Rules, or Section 68 of the Securities Regulation Code.

The SEC said that for the country's accounting industry to become globally competitive, the forms of financial statements had to be revised and made consistent with the international standards for accounting.

IAS is the globally recognized accounting standards and procedures with regard to the presentation of financial statements.

The SEC said the revised forms could be downloaded from the SEC's website (www.sec.gov.ph).

The SEC said that it would continue to make amendments to the Securities Regulation Code to incorporate international accounting and auditing standards until the said standards were fully adopted in 2005.

Efforts to amend the Securities Regulation Code are in line with the commission's thrust to promote a high standard of disclosure by companies so as to ensure that investors get the vital information they need to weigh the risks and merits of their investments.

The SEC also said it was closely working with the Board of Accountants (BOA), the Philippine Institute of Public Accountants (Picpa) and the Professional Regulation Commission to strengthen and improve the accounting industry.

Michelle V. Remo

CURRENCIES

Jan. 27, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.923788	1.000000	53.630000
Japan	Yen	0.007844	0.008491	0.455400
United Kingdom	Pound	1.508822	1.633300	87.593900
Hongkong	Dollar	0.118451	0.128223	6.876600
Switzerland	Franc	0.682115	0.738389	39.599800
Canada	Dollar	0.608556	0.658762	35.329400
Singapore	Dollar	0.535374	0.579542	31.080800
Australia	Dollar	0.546523	0.591611	31.728100
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.431020	2.631579	141.131600
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.246357	0.266681	14.302100
Brunei	Dollar	0.533827	0.577868	30.991100
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000112	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.021650	0.023436	1.256900
UAE	Dirham	0.251514	0.272264	14.601500
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.082500	58.054500
ArgentinaPeso	0.290499	0.314465	16.864800	
Brazil	REAL	0.256679	0.277855	14.901400
Denmark	Kroner	0.134604	0.145709	7.814400
India	Rupee	0.019327	0.020921	1.122000
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.243134	0.263193	14.115000
Mexico	New Peso	0.085095	0.092115	4.940100
New Zealand	Dollar	0.507520	0.549390	29.463800
Norway	Kroner	0.134094	0.145157	7.784800
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015889	0.017200	0.922400
South Africa	Rand	0.106146	0.114903	6.162200
Korea	Won	0.000794	0.000860	0.046100
Sweden	Kroner	0.108236	0.117166	6.283600
Syria	Pound	0.017937	0.019417	1.041300
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026816	0.029028	1.556800
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000481	0.000521	0.027900

BIR toughens . . .

From page B1

refinements.

For instance, the BIR order will no longer allow the inclusion in the computation of seating capacity of foldable seats in vans, which is currently allowed. Parayno said the draft regulation would also adopt the 1999 provision excluding all four-wheel drive vehicles regardless of seating capacity from the tax breaks given to 10-seaters.

The BIR chief said that jumper seats accessible only from the rear door would no longer be counted as seats as well as those that do not provide sufficient leg room like that of the CR-V.

Parayno said the BIR immediately drafted an order canceling the excise tax break of airlines that were buying jet fuel for local use after the Department of Energy said that local aviation fuel were available in sufficient quantities and reasonable amount.

USTR remarks exaggerated, PHAP says

THE PHARMACEUTICAL and Healthcare Association of the Philippines is seeking to correct misinterpretations arising from reports that Washington has decided to initiate a moratorium on the use of the WTO dispute settlement mechanism against countries that may issue compulsory licenses to import much-needed pharmaceutical products.

In earlier reports, US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick was quoted as saying that the United States had decided to lobby other WTO members to relax rules on the importation of patented drugs to other countries.

"We have made a commitment, effective immediately. The US will not challenge any World Trade Organization member that exports such medicine produced under compulsory license to a country in need," Zoellick was quoted as saying.

In reaction, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II welcomed the move, saying it "may complement the government program to provide cheap essential medicines to a majority of Filipinos."

However, a statement issued by Bradford Bell, economics officer of the US Embassy, described the reports as "an exaggeration of the US trade representative's proposal."

Locals amass $6B in RP debt papers

By Clarissa S. Batino

MORE dollar-denominated Philippine debts went into the hands of local investors in September last year, easing the pressure created by the country's growing public debt.

Documents released yesterday by the central bank showed that the debt papers held by local investors, including banks and government financial institutions, went up 19 percent to $5.814 billion as of Sept. 30 last year, up from the previous year's $4.9 billion.

Bangko Sentral Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said this development was helping ease the pressure created by the country's rising public debt.

Critics, however, insisted that the country's total debts—amounting to almost 80 percent of the economy—were still growing uncontrollably.

Tetangco explained that the increasing exposure of local investors to dollar-denominated debt papers issued by the Philippine government and corporate borrowers was helping ease the country's external obligations.

Local investments in dollar-denominated Philippine debt papers were deducted from the total debt stock, which stood at $53.6 billion as of end-September from $54.9 billion in the second quarter.

Observers expect local investments in dollar-denominated Philippine debt papers to grow some more in the coming months, as the government has said it will go back to markets abroad to raise more funds to trim its budget deficit.

HSBC Corp. treasurer John McGowan confirmed in an earlier interview that there had been a marked increase in the exposure of local investors to Philippine government- and privately issued debt papers since last year, when ROPs and Philippine corporate bond issues were performing well in markets abroad.

McGowan said investors were flocking to the Philippines' foreign debt issues as an option to maximize their placements in view of prevailing low interest rates.

"There are still lots of liquidity in the local market, and much of this goes into the peso and dollar bonds," McGowan said.

Former Bangko Sentral Governor Gabriel Singson said the ROP bonds had become the new investment outlet for local banks, as credit prospects were still hampered by a huge level of bad accounts and local interest rates remained low.

Since last year, the government has been taking advantage of a bigger appetite for Philippine dollar bonds among local and foreign investors, issuing close to $3 billion in foreign bonds.

DOTC to reorient 'Telepono sa Barangay' project

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications is set to "reorient" its multibillion-peso "Telepono sa Barangay" project to include access to the Internet instead of just plain telephony.

Communications Undersecretary Virgilio Peña said in an interview that the two phases of the original project—first implemented under the Ramos administration—only provided telephone access to a limited number of barangays.

"It's almost 70 to 90 percent complete, so we'll still push through with it. But we'll reorient this program to include (Internet service providers)," he said.

The DOTC had wanted to tap privately owned telecommunications firms to roll out telephone lines in some of the country's remote communities, but there had been no takers.

A source from the cable television industry revealed that former Communications Undersecretary Agustin Bengzon approached cable TV operators to participate in the program.

However, the source said, cable TV service providers bucked the proposal, believing the idea of providing telephone services to barangays was not feasible according to their existing business models.

"There's no traffic for data and video there. Besides, what Bengzon proposed will be much more feasible with satellite technology than with cable," he said.

Peña said while it would be good for the private sector to help the government with programs like the Telepono sa Barangay, the DOTC would ultimately still be the one to ensure that unprofitable areas with no takers would be served.

"It's difficult to motivate the private sector because most of the Telepono sa Barangay's target areas are unprofitable," he said.

With a project cost of more than P1.5 billion, the first phase of Telepono sa Barangay gave 347 barangays in eight provinces 3,470 phone lines. The areas covered included Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Quezon, Lanao del Norte, Negros Oriental, Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi.

Illegal LPG refilling business goes on unabated, agents say

THE ILLEGAL liquefied petroleum gas cylinder refilling business continues to proliferate despite a government crackdown that has led to the filing of several cases against businessmen suspected of engaging in this trade, government agents have reported.

The National Bureau of Investigation is set to resume operations against establishments suspected of illegal LPG refilling following reports that the trade remains unabated in various parts of the country.

In a statement, the NBI warned it was "dead serious in this campaign and that all raided parties will be charged in court."

Sen. Teresita Aquino-Oreta earlier urged the NBI to act against the illegal trade amid reports that some two to three million defective LPG cylinders were in circulation.

The Bureau of Fire Protection has traced the cause of over 500 fire incidents all over the country to these defective cylinders.

NBI operations last year against illegal LPG refillers resulted in the filing of charges against several establishments suspected of engaging in the trade.

Among these are Omni Gas Corp. and Republic Gas Corp. based in Pasig City and Malabon, respectively. Also charged were Northland Gas Corp., and Romars International Gases Corp. based in Laoag City and Bicol.

The Department of Energy also earlier filed charges against several firms suspected of illegal refilling.

Among these are Capitol Allied Trading, Excel Gas Corp., Lukban Gas Inc., Eslee Trading and J. Gutierrez Gas Center.

The NBI warned that the operation of illegal refillers posed serious risks to the safety of both households and commercial establishments. Illegally refilled LPG cylinders, the NBI said, did not have the safety features of the standard authorized products.

NBI officials had expressed concern that the absence of the legally mandated safety measures and quality standards in the illegally refilled cylinders "significantly raised the possibility of domestic accidents.

They noted that the suspects "usually do not repair or rehabilitate the cylinders which they illegally refill."

The NBI is also investigating reports that illegally refilled LPG cylinders tend to be underweight by 10 to 30 percent.

The NBI said it was expanding its surveillance operations against suspected illegal refillers in a bid to "strike at the very root of this racket."

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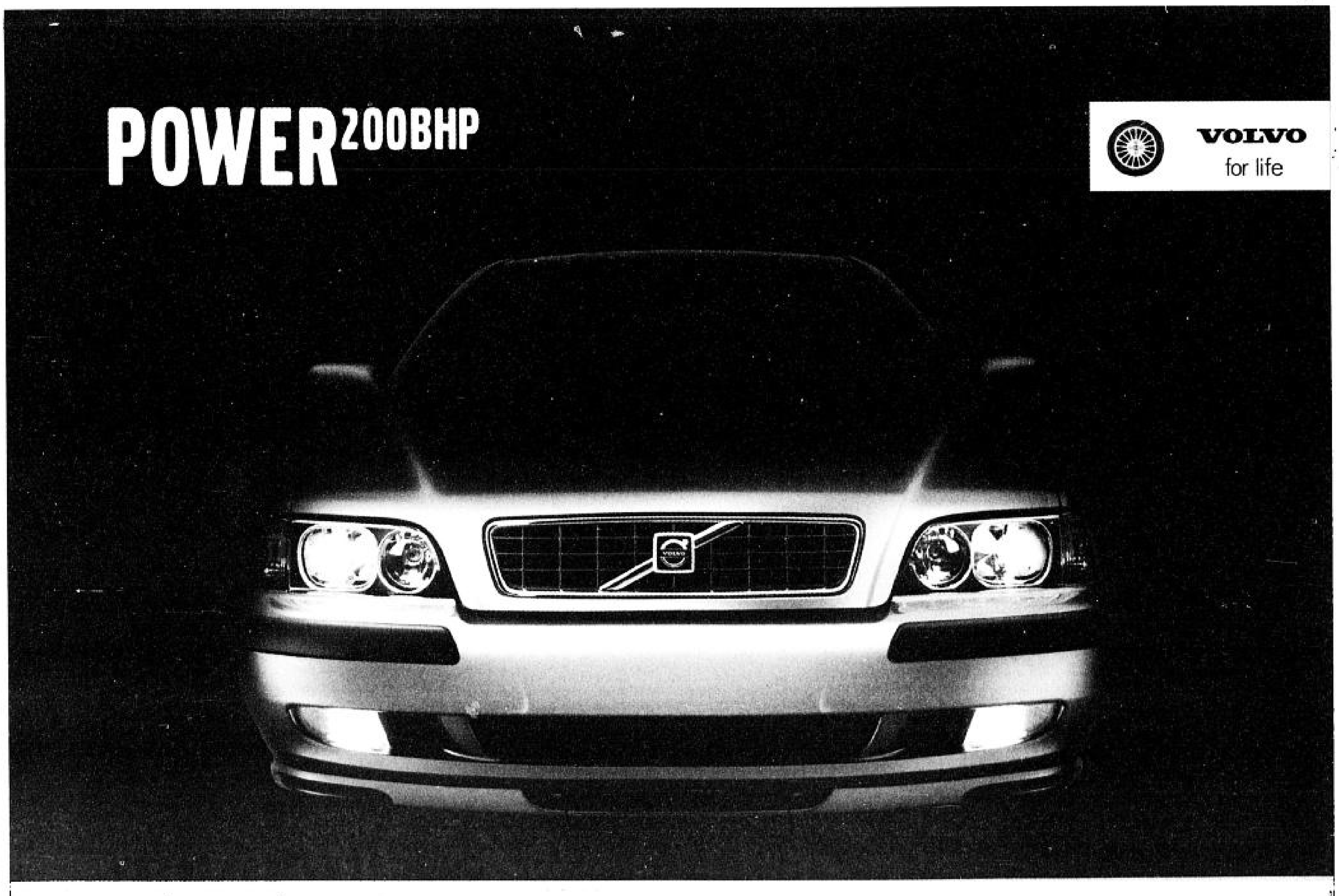

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Short Iraq war would lower oil prices, study says

LONDON—A short US-led war on Iraq would sharply lower oil prices and also boost economic growth in the United States, according to a study published Monday by an influential business leaders' group.

But the Institute of Directors (IoD), which represents 55,000 business leaders, warned that a prolonged war would have the opposite effect, sparking a massive surge in oil prices and wrecking US growth this year.

According to the IoD's study, a short war, which it sees as the most likely scenario, would cause oil prices to fall by $10 euros) from their current level of around $30 per barrel to $20.

A brief war would also make it easier for US President George Bush to obtain Congressional approval for his recently announced fiscal stimulus package, intended to breathe new life into the economy, the IoD said.

"A short and successful war could guarantee speedy and full implementation of the fiscal package. Lower oil prices would also provide the Federal Reserve with further opportunity to reduce interest rates."

A short war would actually have a positive overall impact on the economy and help the US to growth of 2.9 percent this year, the IoD concluded.

"In economic terms, a short war is better than no war, or no regime change, because of the removal of uncertainty," it said.

But the Institute issued a stark warning about the economic consequences of prolonged military action in Iraq.

It said a long drawn-out war could make the price of oil leap to some $80 (euros) per barrel, cause the US stock exchanges to fall 30 percent and US GDP to shrink by some 2 percent this year.

"There are tremendous military, political and economic uncertainties facing the US and world economy this year," said Graeme Leach, the author of the report. *AFP*

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM

DAR Administrative Order No. 02 · Series of 2003

SUBJECT : 2003 RULES AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING LANDOWNER RETENTION RIGHTS

Pursuant to Presidential Decree (PD) No. 27, Section 6 of Republic Act (RA) No. 6657, and in view of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Association of Small Landowners in the Philippines Incorporated versus Secretary of Agrarian Reform* (G.R.. No. 78742 [14 July 1989]), the rules and procedures governing the exercise of retention rights under PD 27 and RA 6657 by landowners are hereby revised as follows:

ARTICLE I
PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

Section 1. *Coverage*- These rules and procedures shall apply to all applications for retention under PD 27 and RA 6657.

Section 2. *Statement of Policies*- The exercise of retention right by landowners shall be governed by the following policies:

2.1. The landowner has the right to choose the area to be retained by him which shall be compact and contiguous, and which shall be least prejudicial to the entire landholding and the majority of the farmers therein.

2.2. The landowner shall exercise the right to retain by signifying his intention to retain within sixty (60) days from receipt of notice of coverage. Failure to do so within the period shall constitute a waiver of the right to retain any area.

2.3. Upon manifestation of the landowner's intention to retain, he shall indicate the exact location thereof within thirty (30) days from manifestation date. Failure to do so shall authorize the Municipal Agrarian Reform Officer (MARO) to choose said retention area.

2.4. The landowner has the obligation to cultivate the land directly or thru labor administration and thereby make the area he retains productive.

2.5. In all cases, all rights previously acquired by the tenant farmers under PD 27 and the security of tenure of the farmers or farmworkers on the land prior to the approval of RA 6657 shall be respected. Furthermore, actual tenant farmers in the landholdings shall not be ejected or removed therefrom.

2.6. The sale, disposition, lease or transfer of private lands by the original landowner in violation of RA 6657 shall be null and void. Transactions executed prior to RA 6657 shall be valid only when registered with the Register of Deeds within a period of three (3) months after 15 June 1988 in accordance with Section 6 of RA 6657.

ARTICLE II
EXERCISE OF RETENTION RIGHT

Section 3. *Who May Apply for Retention*

3.1. Any person, natural or juridical, who owns agricultural lands with an aggregate area of more than five (5) hectares may apply for retention area. However, a landowner who exercised his right of retention under PD 27 may no longer exercise the same right under RA 6657. Should he opt to retain five (5) hectares in his other agricultural lands, the seven (7) hectares previously retained by him shall be immediately placed under CARP coverage.

3.2. A landowner who owns five (5) hectares or less, of land which are not yet subject of coverage based on the schedule of implementation provided in Section 7 of RA 6657, may also file an application for retention and a Certification of Retention shall be issued in his favor.

3.3. The right of retention of a deceased landowner may be exercised by his heirs provided that the heirs must first show proof that the decedent landowner had manifested during his lifetime his intention to exercise his right of retention prior to 23 August 1990 (finality of the Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Association of Small Landowners in the Philippines Incorporated versus the Honorable Secretary of Agrarian Reform).*

Section 4. *Period to Exercise Right of Retention under RA 6657*

4.1. The landowner may exercise his right of retention at any time before receipt of notice of coverage.

4.2. Under the Compulsory Acquisition (CA) scheme, the landowner shall exercise his right of retention within sixty (60) days from receipt of notice of coverage.

4.3. Under the Voluntary Offer to Sell (VOS) and the Voluntary Land Transfer (VLT)/Direct Payment Scheme (DPS), the landowner shall exercise his right of retention simultaneously at the time of offer for sale or transfer.

Section 5. *Where to File Application*- Any duly completed application for retention may be filed with the office of the Regional Director or the Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer (PARO). The receiving office shall forward the application to the MARO with jurisdiction over the landholding after assigning a docket number.

Section 6. *Waiver of the Right of Retention.*- The landowner waives his right to retain by committing any of the following acts or omissions:

6.1. Failure to manifest an intention to exercise his right to retain within sixty (60) calendar days from receipt of notice of CARP coverage.

6.2. Failure to state such intention upon offer to sell or application under the VLT/DPS scheme.

6.3. Execution of any document stating that he expressly waives his right to retain. The MARO and/or PARO and/or Regional Director shall attest to the due execution of such document.

6.4. Execution of a *Landowner Tenant Production Agreement and Farmer's Undertaking* (LTPA-FU)or *Application to Purchase and Farmer's Undertaking* (APFU) covering subject property.

6.5. Entering into a VLT/DPS or VOS but failing to manifest an intention to exercise his right to retain upon filing of the application for VLT/DPS or VOS.

6.6. Execution and submission of any document indicating that he is consenting to the CARP coverage of his entire landholding.

6.7. Performing any act constituting estoppel by laches which is the failure or neglect for an unreasonable length of time to do that which he may have done earlier by exercising due diligence, warranting a presumption that he abandoned his right or declined to assert it.

ARTICLE III
AWARD OF RETENTION AREA

Section 7. *Criteria/Requirements for Award of Retention*- The following are the criteria in the grant of retention area to landowners:

7.1. The land is private agricultural land;

7.2. The area chosen for retention shall be compact and contiguous and shall be least prejudicial to the entire landholding and the majority of the farmers therein;

7.3. The landowner must execute an affidavit as to the aggregate area of his landholding **in the entire Philippines**; and

7.4. The landowner must submit a list of his children who are fifteen (15) years old or over as of 15 June 1988 and who have been actually cultivating or directly managing the farm since 15 June 1988 for identification as preferred beneficiaries, as well as evidence of such.

7.5. The landowner must execute an affidavit stating the names of all farmers, agricultural lessees and share tenants, regular farmworkers, seasonal farmworkers, other farmworkers, actual tillers or occupants, and/or other persons directly working on the land; if there are no such persons, a sworn statement attesting to such fact.

Section 8. *Retention Area*- The area allowed to be retained by the landowner shall be as follows:

8.1. Landowners covered by PD 27 are entitled to retain seven (7) hectares, except those whose entire tenanted rice and corn lands are subject of acquisition and distribution under Operation Land Transfer (OLT). An owner of tenanted rice and corn lands may not retain those lands under the following cases:

8.1.1. If he, as of 21 October 1972, owned more than twenty-four (24) hectares of tenanted rice and corn lands; or

8.1.2. By virtue of Letter of Instruction (LOI) No. 474 , if he, as of 21 October 1972, owned less than twenty-four (24) hectares of tenanted rice and corn lands but additionally owned the following:

8.1.2.1. other agricultural lands of more than seven (7) hectares, whether tenanted or not, whether cultivated or not, and regardless of the income derived therefrom; or

8.1.2.2. lands used for residential, commercial, industrial or other urban purposes from which he derives adequate income to support himself and his family.

8.2. Landowners affected by PD 27 who filed their applications for retention before 27 August 1985, the deadline set by the DAR AO No. 1, Series of 1985, may retain not more than seven (7) hectares of their landholdings regardless of whether or not they complied with LOI 41, 45, and 52.

8.3. Also entitled to such seven (7) hectare retention area under PD 27 are landowners who filed their aplication after 27 August 1985 but complied with LOI 41,45 and 52, which provide for the submission of sworn statements containing the following information:

8.3.1. List of agricultural lands owned by him throughout the country, indicating therein the area and location of each parcel;

8.3.2. Principal crops to which each parcel of land is devoted. For those areas devoted primarily to rice and/or corn, the landowners shall indicate:

8.3.2.1. the portions actually cultivated by tenants;
8.3.2.2. the names of such tenants; and
8.3.2.3. the area tilled by each tenant as of 21 October 1972;

8.3.3. The average gross harvest of each tenant (on a parcel of rice/corn land) during the three (3) crop years immediately preceding 21 October 1972; and

8.3.4. Liens and/or encumbrances, if any, the amounts thereof, and the names and addresses of the parties who have liens and/or encumbrances over such properties as of 21 October 1972.

8.4. Landowners who filed their applications after the 27 August 1985 deadline and did not comply with LOI 41,45, and 52 shall be entitled only to a maximum of five (5) hectares as retention area.

8.5. Landowners who failed to apply for retention under PD 27, and who did not comply with the 27 August 1985 deadline, shall be allowed to retain a maximum of five (5) hectares in accordance with RA 6657 except those who under PD 27 are disqualified to retain:

8.5.1. If he, as of 21 October 1972, owned more than twenty-four (24) hectares of tenanted rice and corn lands; or

8.5.2. By virtue of Letter of Instruction (LOI) No. 474, if he, as of 21 October 1972, owned less than twenty-four (24) hectares of tenanted rice and corn lands but additionally owned the following:

8.5.2.1. other agricultural lands of more than seven (7) hectares, whether tenanted or not, whether cultivated or not, and regardless of the income derived therefrom; or

8.5.2.2. lands used for residential, commercial, industrial or other urban purposes from which he derives adequate income to support himself and his family.

8.6. A landowner whose landholdings are covered under CARP may retain an area of not more than five (5) hectares thereof. In addition, each of his children, whether legitimate, illegitimate, or legally adopted, may be awarded an area of not more than three (3) hectares as preferred beneficiary, provided that the child is at least fifteen (15) years old as of 15 June 1988 and that he is actually tilling the land or directly managing the farmholding from 15 June 1988 up to the filing of the application for retention and/or the time of the acquisition of the landholding under CARP.

8.7. The original homestead grantees or their direct compulsory heirs who still own the original homestead at the time of the approval of RA 6657 may retain the same area as long as they continue to cultivate the said homestead.

8.8. For marriages covered by the New Civil Code, in the absence of the agreement for the judicial separation of property, spouses who own only conjugal properties may retain a total of not more than five (5) hectares of such properties. However, if either or both of them are landowners in their respective rights (capital and/or paraphernal), they may retain not more than five (5) hectares of their respective landholdings. In no case, however, shall the total retention of such couple exceed ten (10) hectares.

8.9.. For marriages covered by the Family Code, which took effect on 3 August 1988, a husband owning capital property and/or a wife owning a paraphernal property may retain not more than five (5) hectares each, provided they executed a judicial separation of properties prior to entering into such marriage. In the absence of such an agreement, all properties (capital, paraphernal and conjugal) shall be considered to be held in absolute community, i.e., the ownership relationship is one, and, therefore,only a total of five (5) hectares may be retained.

ARTICLE IV
EFFECTS OF THE EXERCISE OF RETENTION RIGHT

Section 9. *When Retained Area is tenanted*

9.1. In case the area selected by the landowner or awarded for retention by the DAR is tenanted, the tenant shall have the option to choose whether to remain therein as lessee or be a beneficiary in the same or another agricultural land with similar or comparable features.

9.2. In case the tenant declines to enter into leasehold and there is no available land to transfer, or if there is, the tenant refuses the same, he may choose to be paid disturbance compensation by the landowner in such amount as may be agreed between the parties taking into consideration the improvements made on the land. However, in no case shall the agreed amount be less than five (5) times the average gross harvest on their landholding during the last five (5) preceding calendar years pursuant to Section 36 of RA 3844, as amended by Section 7 of RA 6389. If the parties fail to agree on the amount of disturbance compensation, either party may file a petition for fixing disturbance compensation with the appropriate Provincial Agrarian Adjudicator (PARAD). In the latter case, the petitioner must show proof that earnest efforts were exerted by the parties to fix the amount of disturbance compensation, which efforts proved unsuccessful, before the same was filed with the PARAD. The tenant shall not be dispossessed or ejected from the landholding, unless disturbance compensation is paid and proof thereof is submitted to the MARO.

9.3. The tenant must exercise his option within one (1) year from the time the landowner manifests his choice of the area for retention, or from the time the MARO has chosen the area to be retained by the landowner, or from the time an order is issued granting the retention.

9.4. In case the tenant chooses to remain in the retained area, he shall be considered a leaseholder and shall lose his right to be an Agrarian Reform Beneficiary (ARB) under CARP. In this case, the required lease agreement shall be executed in accordance with relevant issuances on the matter.

9.5. The provisions on preemption and redemption under RA 3844, as amended, shall apply to the lessee.

ARTICLE V
OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section 10. *Responsibilities of the MARO*- In the processing of applications for retention, the MARO shall have the following responsibilities:

10.1. Determine whether or not the original homestead grantees or their direct compulsory heirs still own and actually cultivate the homestead land, when applicable.

10.2. Conduct field verification and investigation, together with the landowner or his authorized representative, to determine the following:

10.2.1. Landholding of the landowner in relation to his application for retention;

10.2.2. Qualifications of the applicant and their children as their compulsory heirs;

10.2.3. Tenants, farmworkers and/or actual occupants within subject landholding; and

10.2.4. Other factors relevant to the application for retention.

10.3. Notify all tenants, farmworkers and/or actual occupants of the schedule of all conferences/dialogues regarding said application for retention.

10.4. Identify and facilitate the necessary land transfer for tenants opting to be beneficiaries in another landholding of the same landowner with similar or comparable features.

10.5. Identify the tenants opting to be leaseholders and facilitate the execution of the corresponding leasehold contracts.

10.6. Preside over the negotiations between the tenants/beneficiaries in the determination of disturbance compensation should the tenants/beneficiaries opt to accept the same from the landowner.

10.7 Prepare a sketch plan of the area to be retained by the landowner in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

10.8. Prepare a Retention Folder indicating therein his findings and recommendations and submit the same to the PARO.

10.9. Identify prime agricultural areas owned by landowners who waived their right to choose which area to retain or those who waived their right to exercise the right of retention using the following factors:

10.9.1. Commodity produced;
10.9.2. Terrain;
10.9.3. Infrastructure available; and
10.9.4. Soil fertility.

10.10. Notify the landowner, through personal service with proof of receipt or by registered mail with return card, the portion selected as his retention area upon failure of the landowner to exercise his right of retention within the period specified in these Rules.

Section 11. *Responsibilities of the PARO*- The PARO, on the other hand, shall have the following responsibilities.

11.1. Review and evaluate the report and recommendations submitted by the MARO;

11.2. If the Retention Folder is in order, forward the same, together with his findings and recommendations, to the Regional Director for appropriate action. Otherwise, return the same to the MARO for appropriate action. The PARO may conduct his own field investigation and conferences/dialogues.

11.3. Upon receipt of the Retention Folder and the Order of Approval from the Regional Director, the PARO shall segregate the appropriate retained area in coordination with the DENR. The DENR shall furnish the Regional Director four (4) copies for distribution to the PARO, MARO, Register of Deeds, Landowner and other concerned parties.

11.4. Conduct the final survey of the area and draft a Certificate of Retention.

11.5. On the basis of the owner's duplicate copy of title, approved segregation plan, and technical description, request the Register of Deeds to prepare two (2) separate titles:

(1) Landowner's title for the landholding covered by compulsory acquisition, voluntary offer to sell or voluntary land transfer/direct payment scheme, as the case may be; and

(2) Landowner's title for the retained area;

and request the Register of Deeds to prepare another title in the name of the Republic of the Philippines for lands covered by CA and VOS.

Section 12. *Responsibilities of the Regional Director*- The Regional Director shall have the following responsibilities:

12.1. Review and evaluate the documents submitted by the PARO. If the documents are in order, issue an Order of Approval attaching the sketch plan of the retained area. The Order of Approval shall specify that the retained area is subject to a final survey to be conducted by the PARO. Otherwise, issue an Order of Denial; and

12.2. Forward the Order of Approval or Denial, as the case may be to the PARO for distribution to the concerned parties.

12.3. Forward copies of all orders of approvals or denials to the BLAD for the purpose of creating a database on all lands subject of retention and landowners who already exercised retention rights. The Bureau of Land Acquisition and Distribution (BLAD) shall also periodically monitor if any person had applied for or been granted retention more than once in any other region in the Philippines based on its records.

12.4. Issue a Certificate of Retention

Section 13. *Decision of the Regional Director*- The decision of the Regional Director approving or disapproving the application for retention shall become final after fifteen (15) days from receipt of the decision, unless duly appealed to the DAR Secretary pursuant to the Rules of Procedure for Agrarian Law Implementation (ALI) cases.

ARTICLE VI
FINAL PROVISIONS

Section 14. *Transitory Provision*- All pending applications for retention shall be processed in accordance with the procedures provided herein. Within ninety (90) days from effectivity of this Order, all Regional Offices shall submit an inventory of all past and present pending cases involving retention in accordance with the format to be prepared by the BLAD within fifteen (15) days from the date of this Order.

Section 15. *Repealing Clause*- This Order modifies or repeals DAR Administrative Order No. 11, Series of 1990 , Administrative Order No. 4, Series of 1991, Administrative Order No. 5, Series of 2000, and all other administrative issuances inconsistent herewith.

Section 16. *Separability Clause*- In the event that any of the provisions of this Order is declared unconstitutional or illegal, the validity of the other provisions shall not be affected by said declaration.

Section 17. *Effectivity*- This Order shall take effect ten (10) days after its publication in two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Diliman, Quezon City, 16 January 2003.

HERNANI A. BRAGANZA
Secretary

Inquirer–January 28, 2003

No recovery in '03 for IT

DAVOS, Switzerland—Technology executives scrambled to tone down expectations for 2003 this week after hard-learned lessons that their customers cannot predict the future.

From Microsoft's Bill Gates to Michael Dell, the founder of the world's second-largest personal computer maker, few were prepared to predict a recovery in global demand for technology after the Internet bubble burst.

"There's no big uptick," Gates told the World Economic Forum.

"It's OK, but not good," said Dell, Chief Executive of Dell .

Many of the chiefs of the world's largest technology companies spent the past days in the Swiss ski resort, host each year to some 2,000 political and business leaders.

The corridors have been full of talk of war on Iraq and the sluggish US economy. *Reuters*

WTO upbeat on drugs issue

DAVOS, Switzerland—Talks at the Davos business summit have boosted prospects for reviving a stalled deal on cheap drugs to save lives in developing countries, the head of the World Trade Organization (WTO) said on Sunday.

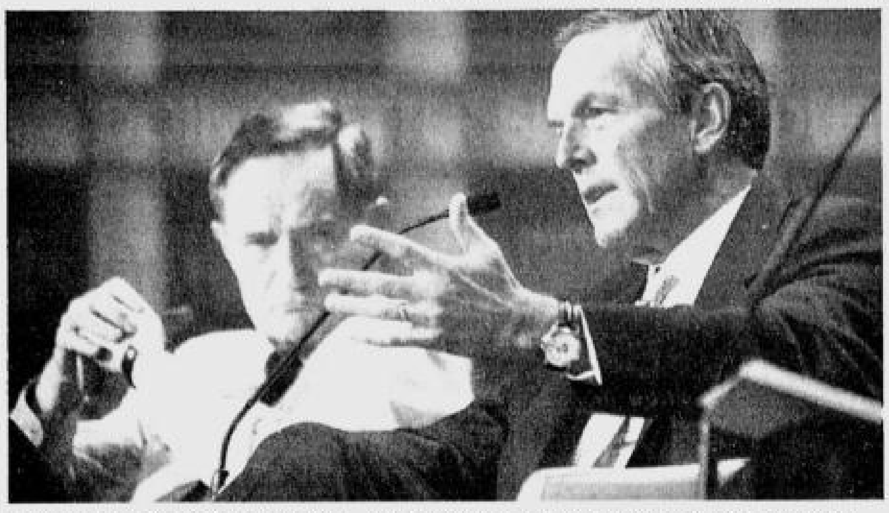
Countries remain far apart on slashing farm support, WTO Director General Supachai Panitchpakdi added, but he said a farm deal may still be salvaged by a March 31 negotiating deadline, a key step towards rescuing a new global trade accord.

Both issues are key potential stumbling blocks to world trade reform talks set to start in Cancun, Mexico, in September.

Officials and business executives say more liberal trade rules could give faltering economic growth a real shot in the arm.

Panitchpakdi was upbeat after talking to officials from top drugmakers at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos.

"In the last few days we have had quite significant understanding of the issue at hand," he told a panel discussion at the WEF meeting. *Reuters*



US Secretary of Commerce Donald L. Evans (R) gives a speech as French Finance Minister Francis Mer listens to him during a conference on the global economic outlook at the World Economic Forum in Davos. AFP

Finance leaders calm despite dollar fall

DAVOS, Switzerland—Experts might fret, but top finance ministers and business leaders at the World Economic Forum are showing surprisingly little concern over the soaring euro and tumbling dollar.

Distracted by the prospect of war in Iraq, policymakers appear to be assuming that the US currency will regain its balance once market turmoil triggered by geopolitical uncertainty passes.

"In these uncertain times with so many downside risks, it is very difficult to count on exchange rates," Caio Koch-Weser, Germany's secretary of state for finance, said.

This view was common among world economic leaders in meetings here, said Mexico Finance Secretary Francisco Gil Diaz.

Yet some leading global economists are less sanguine, warning that the dollar may not recover ground and that the dangers to Europe's economy are palpable. If the euro keeps surging, they say, it could choke off growth and push a fragile region into a dangerous deflationary trap.

"I would be very worried," said John Llewellyn, global chief economist at Lehman Brothers in London. "But people are exhausting their worry quota over Iraq." *Reuters*

Japan trade surplus jumps

TOKYO—Japan's trade surplus jumped 51.3 percent last year in the first rise for four years, with exports hitting a record high because of strong Asia-bound shipments, the finance ministry said Monday.

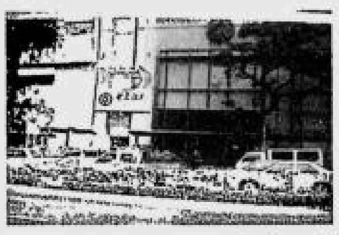
The surplus of 9.9 trillion yen ($84 billion) last year followed a 38.7 percent drop in the surplus in 2001. In December, Japan's trade surplus increased 19.9 percent from a year earlier to 791 billion yen.

"The rise in exports to Asian countries contributed most to the overall trade surplus figure in 2002," a ministry official said.

Exports rose 6.4 percent to a record 52.1 trillion yen over the year.

Shipments to Asian countries accounted for a best ever 22.4 trillion yen, with exports to China alone reaching five trillion yen, also a record.

Overall imports edged down 0.6 percent to 42.2 trillion yen in the first drop in three years. *AFP*



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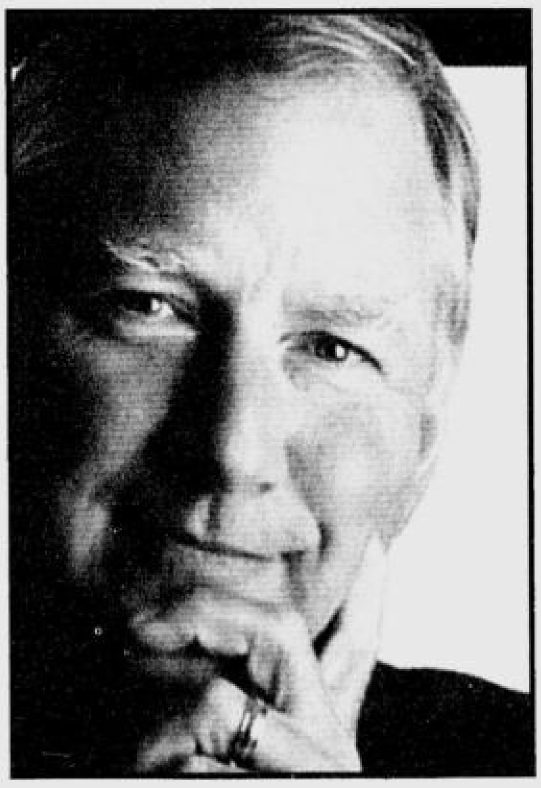

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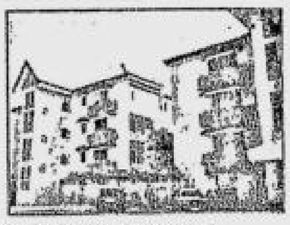

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✣IBA, ZAMBALES 10has 45M nr hway titled 0919-2221766

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

JEON DAE GU

The public is hereby notified that **JEON DAE GU**, whose picture appears at left and whose last known address is 158 Mario Drive, Monte Vista Drive, Cainta, Rizal is being sought by **YL FINANCE CORPORATION** in connection to unsatisfied obligation with the company. **MAKE : DODGE RAM VAN, MODEL: 1996, CHASIS NO. 2B7HB21Z6TK174003, MOTOR NO.: 53020135, PLATE NO.: UNT 191, COLOR: WHITE & BROWN.**

Anyone who has information that would lead to the immediate recovery of the herein above described motor vehicle which is presently morgaged with YL Finance Corp. will be REWARDED.

PLEASE CONTACT: YL FINANCE – Legal Department
#339 Gil Puyat Ave. Ext., Makati City • Tel. Nos. 896-4743 to 44

Republic of the Philippines
CATANDUANES STATE COLLEGES
Virac, Catanduanes

CALL FOR APPLICANTS

A. Position: SUC President II (SG 26)

B. Minimum Qualifications:
1. Filipino Citizen
2. Holder of an earned doctoral degree
3. Preferably not more than 60 years old at the time of application
4. Must have at least five (5) years of relevant managerial and administrative experience
5. Must be morally upright and of good moral character and never been convicted by final judgment of any crime involving moral turpitude

C. In addition, the applicants are required to make full disclosure of all administrative, criminal and civil cases through the following clearances:
1. Ombudsman and Sandiganbayan
2. Civil Service Commission
3. National Bureau of Investigation
4. Statement under oath of any criminal/civil cases if there are any pending in court

D. Interested applicants for the position are requested to send six (6) sets of formal application containing of:
1. Detailed curriculum vitaé and certified supporting documents
2. The applicants proposed mission, vision and thrusts for the Colleges
3. Neuro-Psychiatric examination to be accomplished by any accredited government physician
4. Medical Certificate

Applications/nominations should be submitted on or before March 14, 2003 to Dr. Ma. Cristina D. Padolina c/o Ms. Jennilyn M. Salubayba, 5th Flr. DAP Bldg. San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Tel. No. (02) 638-4870 or to Mr. Renato M. Panti, Board Secretary, Catanduanes State Colleges, Virac, Catanduanes, Tel. No. (052) 811-1295/811-1485.

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PORT DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN LUZON
164 13th Street, Port Area, Manila
Tel. (02) 301-9576 to 79; Fax (02) 527-4790

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

All interested parties with capitalization of not less than P30,000,000.00 are invited to apply for pre-qualification and, if pre-qualified to bid for the

LEASE, CONSTRUCTION, MANAGEMENT, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PASSENGER TERMINAL FACILITY AT THE PORT OF CALAPAN, CALAPAN CITY, ORIENTAL MINDORO

Issuance of Bid Documents	January 29 - February 4, 2003
Pre-Bid Conference	February 28, 2003
Submission of Bid Documents	Not later than 2:00 PM, March 17, 2003
Opening of Qualification Documents	2:00 PM, March 17, 2003
Opening of Technical Proposals	10:00 AM, March 24, 2003
Opening of Financial Proposals	10:00 AM, March 31, 2003

Bid documents may be secured upon presentation of Letter of Intent and payment of non-refundable amount of P5,000.00 exclusive of VAT, at the Port District Office of Southern Luzon at the above address. The venue for all activities shall be at the Port District Office of Southern Luzon.

The Philippine Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereat, waive any defect of informality therein and to accept the bids most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) HECTOR E. MIOLE
Port District Manager

(PDI-Jan. 13, 21 & 28, 2003)

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HRD STF 09205366330 ERIC

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Our Dearly Beloved Tatay

JOSE JOVITO V. LIZA, JR.

(Uncle Joe Liza)

He is survived by **Rosalina, Belle & Carlo, Joey & Mely, Anthony & Dorie, Jovy & Romy, Manny & Alma, Freddie & Jenny, Owee;** grandchildren **Cedrick, Celene, Cyrus, Chino, Jayvee, Daal, Daan, Dianne, Patrick, Rainier, Roseann, Kimberly, Justine, Kevin, Jenil, Ien.**

His remains lie in state at Del Pilar Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (Inside Manila Memorial Park).

Interment will be on Thursday, January 30, 2003 after the 9:00 AM Mass at Manila Memorial Park.

MESSAGE OF THANKS

The family and relatives of the late

GRACIA CUENCA MATEO

who peacefully joined her Creator
on January 19, 2003

wish to express their gratitude and appreciation to all those who in one way or another condoled with them in their hour of bereavement.

"Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come..." Psalm 23:6

JOSE M. RAMIREZ

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 26, 2003 at the age of 80.

His loving wife **HELEN;**
children **MARIBEL & RICKY, MARIROSE & JOVEY, JOBERT, & CARLOS;**
grandchildren **AYA, PAOLO, JOBO, & RAPHAEL;**
together with their relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains lie in state
at St. Alphonsus de Liguori Mortuary Chapel,
Magallanes Village, Makati City.

A funeral Mass will be held
on Thursday, January 30, 2003 at 9:00 a.m.
at the St. Alphonsus de Liguori Church.

Most Rev. Rolando J. Tria Tirona, O.C.D., D.D.,
The Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese of Malolos
Extend their sincerest prayers and condolences
To the relatives and friends of

REV. FR. CARMELO M. BALTAZAR

Who peacefully joined his Creator, our Loving Father
on January 26, 2003, Sunday at the age of 68.

His cremated remains were interred on January 27, 2003 at La Loma Cemetery at 2:00 p.m. after a concelebrated Mass at Funeraria Paz Memorial Chapel.

A Requiem Mass will be offered on Friday, January 31, 2003 at 6:15 a.m. at the Immaculate Conception Seminary Chapel in Tabe, Guiguinto, Bulacan.

"Living or Dying, Lord Jesus, I would be Yours.
Keep me Your own forever.
Draw me day by day nearer to You
until I am wholly filled with your Love."

We lovingly remember our Papa on his
Twenty Second Death Anniversary

OSCAR VENTANILLA, SR.

a consummate entrepreneur, outstanding councilor,
and a benevolent father

of Cabanatuan City
who died on January 29, 1981

Holy Masses will be offered tomorrow at the following churches:

1.	**Saint Nicholas Tolentine Cathedral** *Cabanatuan City*	All Masses
2.	**Our Mother of Perpetual Help Chapel** *Cabanatuan City*	6:00 A.M.
3.	**Our Lady of Fatima Parish** *Philamlife Homes, Las Piñas, M.M.*	All Masses
4.	**Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary** *Multinational Village, Parañaque, M.M.*	All Masses
5.	**Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary** *Rosario Complex, San Pedro, Laguna*	All Masses
6.	**Sto. Niño de Cebu Parish** *Biñan, Laguna*	All Masses
7.	**Parish of the Holy Sacrifice** *U.P. Campus, Diliman, Quezon City*	All Masses
8.	**Sta. Maria Della Strada Parish** *Katipunan Ave., Diliman, Quezon City*	All Masses
9.	**St. James the Great** *Alabang Village, Muntinlupa*	All Masses
10.	**St. Jerome Emiliani and Sta. Susana Parish** *Ayala Alabang Village*	All Masses
11.	**Mary Help of Christians Parish** *Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque*	All Masses
12.	**Immaculate Conception Parish** *Concepcion, Marikina City*	6:00 A.M.

His surviving children, **Gloria, Oscar Jr., Rosalinda;** sons- and daughters-in-law; and grandchildren request relatives, friends and pious readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." Matthew 10:39

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

• DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT •
MESSAGE OF THANKS •
DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS •

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Urgent Ofc Staf/Personel
18-45yo w/wo exp Start ASAP
912-1488 Ms. Gonzales

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late TEODORO L. ESPIRITU who died on July 23, 2002 has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs per Doc. No. 488, Page No. 98, Book No. II, Series of 2002 dated Dec. 18, 2002 of Notary Public Ruderico B. Tullo of Davao City.
(PDI-Jan. 14, 21 & 28, 2003)

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5276418

Training Center for Caregiver 4128728 4100539 4127079

AUCTION SALE

FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP, INC. 1137 P. Gil St. Paco, Mla. Will sell all expired pledges left during the months of June and July 2002 on FEBRUARY 9, 2003, Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
Sons of J. Lanuza-Auctioneer.

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given the loss of San Miguel Corp. Stock Cert. Nos. A74010074 40Shares; A73012491 34Shares; A71120028 22Shares; A69091818 24Shares; A67067248 16Shares; A66049624 9Shares; A57043373 16Shares A57008444 33Shares under the name of Hilaria Audencial. If no contest recieved new certificate will be issued.
(PDI- Jan. 14, 21 & 28, 2003)

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Republic of the Philippines
Procurement Service
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF COMBAT BOOTS** for the **Philippine Air Force.**

The approved budget for this contract is P20,400,000.00.

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **February 4, 2003, 9:30 A.M.** at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **January 21, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00).**

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **February 20, 2003 at 9:30 A.M.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. 563-94-02 or 563-93-74.

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation, PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO P. OPIDA
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – Jan. 21 & 28, 2003)

INQUIRER

TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Measles

Q. Is measles the same as German measles?

A. No. The technical term for German measles is *rubella*, that for measles is *rubeola*. Both are contagious viral diseases, usually contracted in childhood; in each case, a single attack confers lifelong immunity. Of the two, measles is the worse, resulting in high temperatures (40° C or 104° F being not unusual), an itchy rash, and complications that may include pneumonia, otitis media (inflammation or infection of the middle ear), laryngitis, and other afflictions. But German measles, while less severe an illness, can result in fetal anomalies if contracted during the first trimester of pregnancy, and all women of childbearing age who are likely to risk exposure and are not immune should be vaccinated.

For the Record. The world's longest confined hospital patient was Martha Nelson. She was admitted to the Columbus State Institute for the Feeble-Minded in Columbus, Ohio, in 1875. She died in 1975 at the age of 103 years 6 months in the Orient State Institution, Ohio, after spending more than 99 years in hospitals.

Ooops! The American short story writer Bret Harte (1836-1902) was once working as editor of a small paper in a mining settlement in California. The wife of one of the leading citizens had died, and Harte wrote a glowing obituary. His closing line: 'She was distinguished for charity above all the other ladies of this town." Later on that day he went back to his office to look over the proofs for the next morning's paper. In reading over the obituary, he noticed that the compositor had made a potentially embarrassing typo. Instead of "charity," the compositor had set "chasrity." Harte crossed out the *s*, put a large question mark in the margin, and went home, relieved he had caught the error. The next morning, he turned to the obit and was horrified. It read: "She was distinguished for chastity (?) above all the other ladies of this town."

WORD WATCH

Obituary (oo bich' oo wer'ee): from the Latin *obitus*, 'death'

PDI – January 28, 2003

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on February 12, 2003, 2:00 p.m., at the Auditorium of the DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on **CASH BASIS:**

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
BULACAN			
AMD-MR-12	Along Camia St., Manzano Subd. Brgy. Ibayo, Marilao	294 m² vacant residential lot (TCT No. T-351786 M)	P 940,800.00
DAVAO			
AMD-ED-5f	Lot 22 Blk 5, Kristina Homes Subd. Lizada, Toril, Davao City	116 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-347751) with building and improvements	P 179,980.00
LUCENA			
LRD-157	Merchan St., Lucena City	805 m² commercial lot (TCT No. T-30703) with building and improvements	P 21,868,900.00
CHATTELS (Sale on "as is, where is" basis)			
AMD-JB-13	Dalaruan, Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro	M/V "Super 85", an 85-footer motorized passenger ferry vessel, twin engine, catamaran type, capable of carrying 185 persons, with machinery and navigational equipment.	P 16,983,000.00
AMD-ED-13a to 13m	Along National Road (near Sta. Anastacia Elem. School), San Rafael, Sto. Tomas, Batangas	13 units various machinery and equipment for fruit juice processing	P 1,520.00 to 98,560.00
AMD-MR-15	Brgy. Maliona, Tayabas, Quezon	One (1) assembly of cone-type ricemilling machine, locally fabricated, 20-25 cavans per hour capacity, with accessories.	P 45,000.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding.
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the Acquired Assets-AMD, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours.
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers:
893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2144/2218/3404 for Code starting with AMD; and
892-3836 or 818-9511 loc. 2128 for LRD-157.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI - Jan. 27 & 28, 2003)

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155

On his ***SIXTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY,***

we lovingly remember

***DADDY,* YOU ARE**
***FOREVER* IN OUR HEARTS...**
***SOREDLY MISSED* BY ALL OF US.**

ATTY. ROMEO REYES TICZON, SR.

(HUSBAND AND BEST FRIEND OF THE LATE ENCARNACION "NENA" LOVINA)

1997 GOLDEN SCROLL AWARDEE FOR MEDICINE AND ALLIED SCIENCES
(PARANGAL NG BAYAN AWARDS)

1997 GINTONG AMA AWARDEE (PARANGAL NG BAYAN AWARDS)

1997 GOLDEN LEADERSHIP AWARDEE FOR BUSINESS AND HERBAL MEDICINE
(SOCIAL ACTION & CIVIC MOVEMENT, INC.)

CORPORATE LAWYER, HERBAL SCIENTIST, AUTHOR OF ELEVEN (11) HERBAL MANUALS AND ONE (1) HERBAL ENCYCLOPEDIA, REALTOR, PHILANTROPIST

who died in the Grace of our Lord on **January 29, 1997, 12:40 p.m.** *at the age of* **79.**

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches tomorrow, **January 29, 2003:**

Redemptorist Church *Baclaran, Manila*	*5:30 AM*
St. Francis Parish Church *Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City*	*6:00 AM*
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish *Doña J. Rodriguez St., New Manila, Quezon City*	*6:00 AM*
Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish *McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City*	*6:15 AM*
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Church *Magallanes Village, Makati City*	*6:15 AM*
National Shrine of the Most Holy Rosary *Sto. Domingo, Quezon City*	*6:30 AM*
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish *Kalayaan, Bel-Air II, Makati City*	*6:30 AM*
Immaculate Concepcion Parish *P. Burgos St., Antipolo, Rizal*	*6:30 AM*
Parish of Our Lady of Fatima *Cor. Rodriguez Ave., & Capinpin St., Bangkal, Makati*	*6:30 AM*
Malate Catholic Church *2000 M.H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila*	*7:00 AM*
Sanctuario de San Jose *Greenhills, Mandaluyong City*	*7:15 AM*
St. John Bosco Parish *A. Arnaiz Avenue cor. Amorsolo St., Makati City*	*7:30 AM*
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene *Quiapo, Manila*	*5:00 PM*
Harrison Plaza Chapel *2/F, Harrison Plaza Shopping City, Malate, Manila*	*5:30 PM*
Mary the Queen Parish *Madison St., Greenhills, San Juan*	*6:00 PM*
Christ the King Parish *Green Meadows Avenue, Quezon City*	*6:00 PM*
Our Lady of the Assumption Parish *Asuncion St., Malate, Manila*	*6:15 PM*
Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace *Our Lady of EDSA, Quezon City*	*7:00 PM*

The ***CHILDREN, IN-LAWS, GRANDCHILDREN*** *and* ***GREAT GRANDCHILDREN,***

- ***JULIETA***
- ***ROMEO, JR.*** *and* ***LEONY DASCO*** *and their children ROSSANA, ARLENE, VINCENT, ADOLF and JULIUS*
- ***OPHELIA*** *and* ***BENNY T. CLEMENTE*** *and their daughters JACLYN, RACHELLE and SUZANNE*
- ***OTHELLO*** *and* ***LIZA ROÑO*** *and their children RAYMUND and ABIGAIL, MA. LUISA, MILAGROS, MELISSA, grandchildren TANIA ISABEL and ROMEO III*
- ***BELEN*** *and* ***ANTONIO V. MARTEL, JR.*** *and their daughter ANTONIA*
- ***ROSSINA***
- ***LOURDES*** *and* ***EDGAR MARTIN*** *and their children MIGUEL, ANTONIO and DEIRDRÉ*
- ***PORTIA*** *and* ***RAMON B. SANTOS*** *and their children RAPHAEL, PAULINE and GABRIEL*
- ***RUBEN*** *(deceased),*

STEPMOTHER IN LAW, NELLY MONTILLA VDA. DE LOVINA,

BROTHER, CONRADO,

BROTHERS IN LAW,
TEDDY H. LOVINA
BERT ACOSTA and
NONIE M. LOVINA,

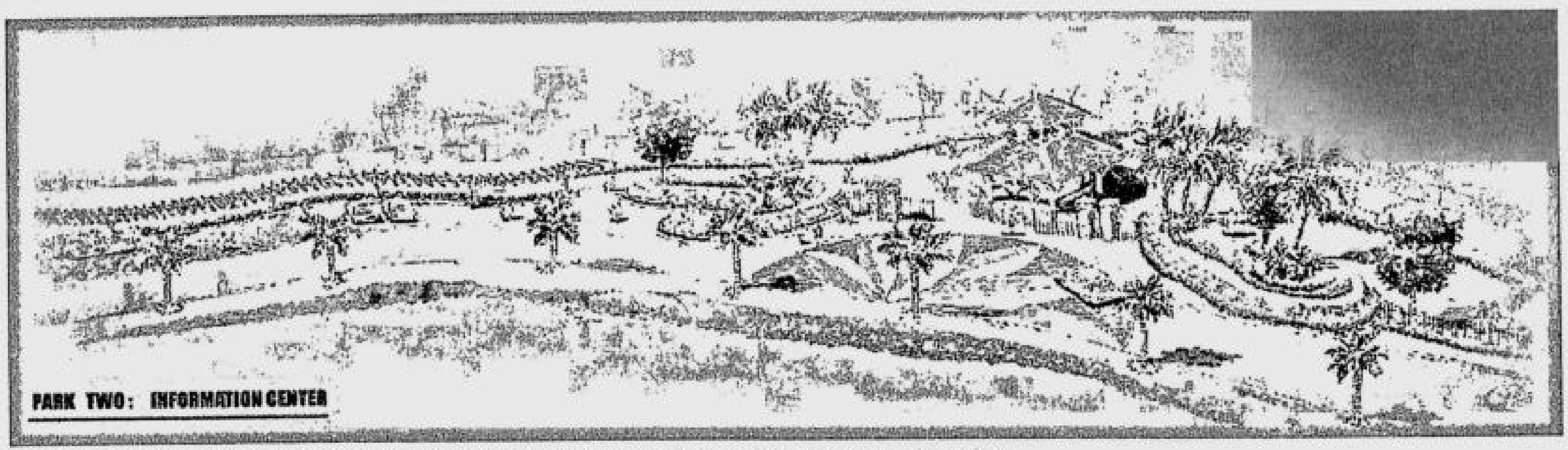
SISTERS IN LAW,
DING MATIAS Vda. de LOVINA
SYLVIA RICARD-LOVINA
NING LOVINA-VILLAR
NORMA DE GUZMAN Vda de LOVINA
CHING LOVINA-ACOSTA
ISABEL VALLES-LOVINA and
MARYLOU PRIETO Vda. de LOVINA

WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND THEIR SINCEREST THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO KEEP HIM IN THEIR PRAYERS.

PANDACAN LINEAR PARK

Buffer amid volatile situation

Text and Photos
by Charles E. Buban



THE PANDACAN Linear Park will be divided into two zones each having its own distinct feature and function.

WHAT do you get when you mix terrorist threat, edgy residents and their local officials? Are oil companies sure to lose money and land as well as a regional fuel lifeline that must not be disrupted?

Like an explosive brew, residents and officials who want the Pandacan oil depot out immediately are pitted against Caltex, Petron and Shell which have to deal with a gargantuan task of dismantling their mammoth fuel facilities while preventing any disruption in their operations.

Then there's the energy department warning that evicting the three oil firms from the depot would result in fuel shortages and price hikes.

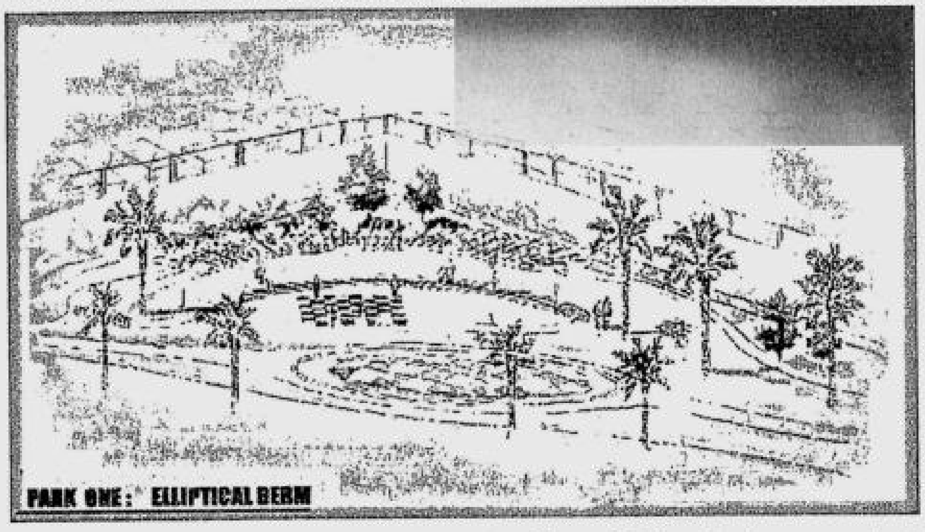
In compliance, the oil companies recently reported that from July to December last year they have already removed from the depot two liquefied petroleum gas spheres and 11 vertical tanks or 46 percent of the total commitment of 28 fuel storage tanks for decommissioning.

Memo of understanding

The removal is in compliance to a memorandum of understanding struck by the oil companies with the city government to allow them to stay, but requiring them to scale down their operations by about 40 percent.

The Pandacan oil depot supplies almost 90 percent of the fuel needs of Metro Manila as well as neighboring provinces Cavite, Laguna, Bulacan, Pampanga, Tarlac and Nueva Ecija.

"There are issues to be addressed and the parties involved are striking at a balance between what the residents and officials want to be done soon and what challenges the oil companies are dealing with to accomplish such a task," said top architectural and urban planner Felino Palafox Jr., founder and managing partner of architectural design, planning and consultancy firm Palafox Associates.



PANDACAN LINEAR PARK

THE PARK will not just be a buffer zone for safety but will be a sanctuary for recreation, leisure and social interaction, according to project chief architect Felino Palafox Jr.

Buffer zone

Palafox Associates was recently commissioned by the Manila city government and the three oil companies to develop a buffer zone for residents in the area.

The project, called the Pandacan Linear Park, will cost over a billion pesos, and will be shouldered by Caltex, Petron and Shell.

Stretching across a two-hectare property, the linear park will surround a major portion of the scaled-down Pandacan oil depot .

"It's not just a buffer zone for safety but will also be a community sanctuary for recreation, leisure and social interaction," described Palafox in an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER.

The linear park is divided into two zones—the Elliptical Berm and the Information Center. The naturally landscaped berm will provide residents a place to hold their gatherings while the information center will offer educational structures for the promenaders.

Lots of greenery

Palafox, whose firm now ranked 104 in the world and No. 1 in Southeast Asia by the prestigious World Architecture of London magazine, revealed the linear park will incorporate lots of greenery, natural landscapes and areas where people can conjugate.

"We mixed the concept of Earth, Wind and Fire; Flora and Fauna; and Fiesta," said Palafox.

The linear park will also incorporate active recreational areas like basketball and tennis court and passive recreation areas like giant chess and dama boards.

"Here, the playing pieces are the players themselves, which will encourage people interaction," explained Palafox.

Palafox added, the linear park will be open to the public from sunrise up to about 10 p.m. when oil depot security will take over to guard the area.

"It's rather unfortunate that the schedule was delayed. But we should remember that urban planning is not just designing nice buildings, communities or parks but doing the right thing at the right place and at the right time," he explained.

"We can't rush things as we have to consider everything for the safety of all the parties concerned."

Ordinance passed

The issue about the oil depot started when the Manila city council passed Ordinance 8027, disallowing the continued operation of Caltex, Petron and Shell in the area.

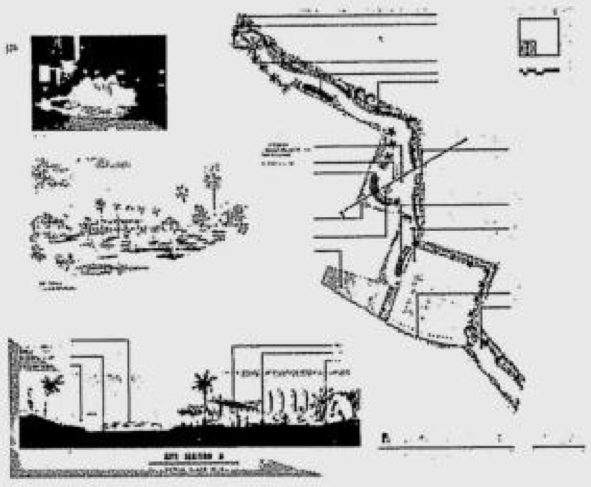
The ordinance reclassified the area of Pandacan oil depot from industrial to commercial/residential mixed-use zone.

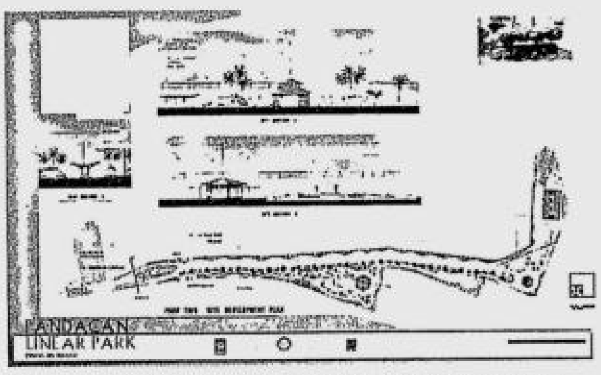
The decision came after residents of Pandacan aired their safety concern citing that the oil depot is a strong target of terrorist attacks.

The three oil firms' business permits were supposed to expire last June 30 but the closure was halted when the executives of the three oil firms entered into an MOU with Manila Mayor Lito Atienza last July 26.

Under the MOU, which the Department of Energy brokered, the parties recognized that scaling down the operations of the oil firms will address City Hall's security and development concerns in Pandacan.

With the reduction, the country's three biggest oil companies will dismantle the 28 oil tanks that are located near the residential areas, establish a "green buffer zone" around the depot and work for a common storage and distribution facility.





THE MORE than P1 billion project will stretch across a two-hectare property separating the scaled-down oil depot from the rest of the neighborhood as shown in the two site plans above and at left.

House construction step by step

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

(First of two parts)

BUILDING DREAMS

IT takes more than just a few steps to build a house, and these steps have been listed and broken down into a number of activities and processes that builders carry out during construction. This list gives you, the owner, a quick glimpse at the major activities that goes on in a typical house construction project. After you complete the detailed plans of your house, then construction can begin.

In this article, we will look inside the first part (the structural part) of construction for a house made of reinforced concrete consisting of footings, columns and beams. This part of construction lasts for around two to three months for an ordinary medium-sized house. The various steps include:

• Preconstruction activities

—*Clearing and grubbing.* Once you have found a site to build your home, you will, most of the time, find it in grass, trees, rocks, garbage and other objects found in many vacant lots. There may even be an existing structure that needs to be demolished. All these have to be removed before construction can proceed to expose the soil where the house will be built. This is done manually or with light equipment for the whole area.

—*Site grading.* After clearing the site, the bare soil is exposed showing its natural contour. It is desirable to, more or less, flatten the area for better workability and for leveling the structure to be built. A few workers carryout this activity with or without earth-moving equipment.

• Excavation

Excavation can begin once the plan is laid out on the site. Stakes are set in the soil, which serve as markers for excavation. Once it is set up, digging can proceed. Holes are dug in the ground for the main footings, as well as for the wall footings, according to the plans provided by the designer, and for all other excavations needed for the construction.

• Foundation

The foundation is the structure that supports the house. It transmits all the weight the house carries to the underlying soil. Footings used in most houses are of reinforced concrete. The steel reinforcements for the footings and the columns are first fabricated on the ground—cut, bent and assembled—and then transferred to the designated positions. To ensure that the house is free of termites, a process called soil poisoning is done to the soil, where environment-friendly chemicals are sprayed to the soil surfaces. Concrete is then poured into the footing and allowed to set and harden before the concrete for the columns can be poured in place.

• Hollow block-laying

Hollow blocks compose most of the walls of a concrete house. These are laid one by one and layer by layer along the excavation, from the bottom of the footing up to the top of the ground floor, and for the other floors as well. Mortar is applied between each layer of hollow blocks and in the holes, ensuring that every block is aligned and leveled horizontally. During this process, water lines and electrical conduits are imbedded so that these would be concealed in the final product.

• Slab concreting

Concrete slabs are made of poured concrete reinforced with steel bars. Most ground floor slabs rest directly on earth while those of the other floors rest on formworks until they set and harden. These provide platforms for the interior of the house, separating each level from one another.

The reinforcements are assembled and placed over a layer of compacted gravel (for ground floor slabs) or on forms (for slabs of other levels). The concrete is poured over the reinforcements and allowed to set and harden. The thickness, as well as the reinforcements of the slabs, may vary depending on the loads that they are designed to carry.

• Plastering

Concrete usually have a rough surface after the removal of the forms. To have a more desirable texture on concrete surfaces and to cover the surfaces of the hollow blocks, cement plaster—a combination of cement and sand—is applied on the surfaces and smoothened. Different kinds of finishes may be applied to different surfaces, depending on the preference of the owner. Types of finishes include plain, sand blast, *anay* (termite), brick, beveled, grooved, etc.

• Roof truss

There should be a means of transferring the weight of the roof to the columns and beams, to the foundation and into the earth. The roof truss provides this means, as well as a platform on which purlins, on which the roof sheets are laid, are attached.

These steel or wooden components are assembled away from the site and are painted with red oxide paint to prevent rust for steel or applied with termite protection for wood. These are transported to the site and lifted into place when ready. The trusses together with the purlins make up the frame of the roof where the insulating material and the roof panels will be installed.

• Roofing and insulation

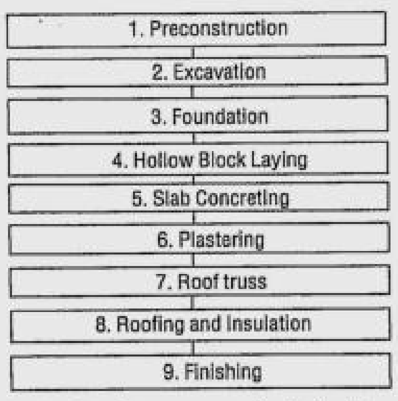
Roofing is added to the structure to protect the interior of the house from the weather. Gutters are made of galvanized sheets or concrete and are installed to control the flow of the water from the roof through the downspout, and eventually to the drain. Insulating material is then installed on the roof frame before the roof panels can be placed to prevent heat coming from the sun from entering, or even damaging some parts of the house. The roof panels are finally placed one by one over the insulation, secured with screws, and painted. Roofing materials can either be prepainted G.I., shingles, clay or other natural materials.

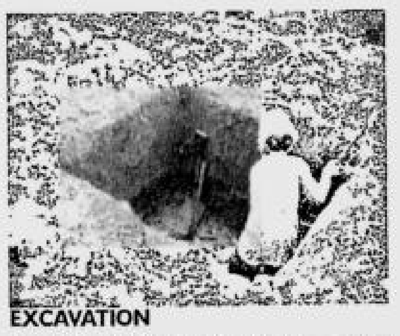
• Finishing

The next stages of construction moves the focus of attention away from the structural components of the house and into the finishing activities which includes painting, landscaping, cabinet installation and tile setting. These will be our topic of discussion next week.

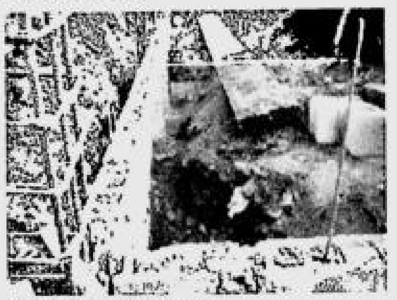
(Alexis A. Acacio is an associate professor of civil engineering at the University of the Philippines. He is also a marketing and technical consultant to various real estate developers and construction companies. For comments and advice you may reach him at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph. or fax to 932-6986.)

The steps in building the main structure





EXCAVATION



HOLLOW block laying

THE RESIDENTIAL condo units command a spectacular view of the sand and the sea.

Resort needs to fast-track renovation

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE LOCATION has all the potentials of a summer beach blockbuster. The view of the sun, the feel of the sea and sand is complemented by the trappings of a perfect vacation hotel and condominium. The structures' colors—earth-based—and Mediterranean architecture are in unison with nature.

Amenities

The amenities aren't lacking, either. For watersports fanatics, there are jet skis, banana boats and outrigger bancas for rent. Land lovers can play billiards, basketball and volleyball as well as table tennis.

At just over a hundred kilometers south of Metro Manila, the combination of sea and land-based fun offered at White Cove would be enough to encourage even the laziest couch potato to ride off to Batangas.

In need of completion

Yet, with all these attractions, something very crucial seems to be missing in the picture. And when you look closer at the structures, you'd find out right away.

The property is in dire need of completion, and in some parts, renovation. And it needs them fast, what with only a couple of months before the full heat of summer drives droves of city folk to the cool, sandy beaches of Batangas.

Potential grandeur

The White Cove property, a 16-hectare beach resort in Barangay Wawa, Nasugbu, Batangas, was acquired by United Coconut Planters Bank in settlement of a loan. And, though the natural beauty of the place is preserved, the man-made structures are in need of development, fast. Everywhere you look at there are unfinished structures, roofing tiles chipped off and weathered away by the salty coastal breezes.

A gigantic unfinished swimming pool construction running almost the entire length of the property's beachfront whispers White Cove's potential grandeur if things get done according to plans.

White Cove nowadays is quiet. Understandable, since its staff says the January and February months are "off-peak." These days, accommodations can be had for as low as P2,500 to P4,000 a day, depending on the size and location of the hotel or condo unit you choose.

Exclusive, upscale mart

A mix of local and foreign tourists can be seen here and there, punctuating the exclusive, upscale market of the resort. White Cove Beach Resort actually develops its condominium units—housed in apartment blocks by the beach—and its hotel along international standards.

Intended by the UCPB to become a world-class destination for both upscale local and foreign tourists, the bank's asset management group is overseeing the development of the resort in line with the bank's thrust to turn acquired assets into earning assets.

Rooms

The available rooms are already plentiful. For the condo side, there are three studio-type units, six one-bedroom units and four two-bedroom units. And they are all for sale, at prices ranging from P3 million to P9 million. All the rooms are fully air-conditioned. Each condo unit has a standard feature: a sala and dining area and a kitchen equipped with a refrigerator and gas range.

WHITE Cove Hotel; renovation work is ongoing

The floor area of a studio type unit measures 40 and 54 sq. m that can accommodate four adults. A one-bedroom condo unit measures 85 sq. m, and can accommodate up to eight adults.

The White Cove Hotel, a stone's throw away from the beach, is a 221-room, elegant Mediterranean-inspired structure sitting on the north side of the resort. As of now, 16 newly refurbished, double occupancy rooms are available.

The hotel will eventually feature a banquet hall and convention center, a coffee shop, an open-air restaurant, and a fine-dining area that can seat 200 people. It will have a recreation lounge and a 1,500-sq.-m infinity pool—yes, the unfinished pool at the beachfront.

Well-paved roads

Don't worry about the roads to White Cove. They are all well-paved. Whether your way is through Aguinaldo Highway or the South Luzon Expressway (exiting Santa Rosa or Carmona), you'll pass by scenic Tagaytay and Taal, a bonus treat for those who don't sleep along the way.

Though Batangas resorts, in general, enjoy good patronage from Metro Manila and Calabarzon residents, White Cove is being developed further as one of the stops for short-haul multidestination tour programs from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, Malaysia and Australia. Furthermore, it is also designed to accommodate special events such as large conventions, weddings and other celebrations.

Right now, all it needs is one strong, fast, growth spurt.

Chinese New Year fete marks residential condo launch

GOOD luck. Good fortune. Good location.

This is the theme of the grand launch of The Columns, Ayala Avenue, the most awaited Makati residential condominium complex of the Community Innovations Inc., a division of Ayala Land.

Tomorrow the CII throws a Chinese New Year's party at the Glorietta to introduce this new project, which will rise on Ayala Avenue corner Sen. Gil Puyat (Buendia), a most desirable location. A dragon dance leads up to the site of the showrooms on Glorietta 3, overlooking the Activity Center.

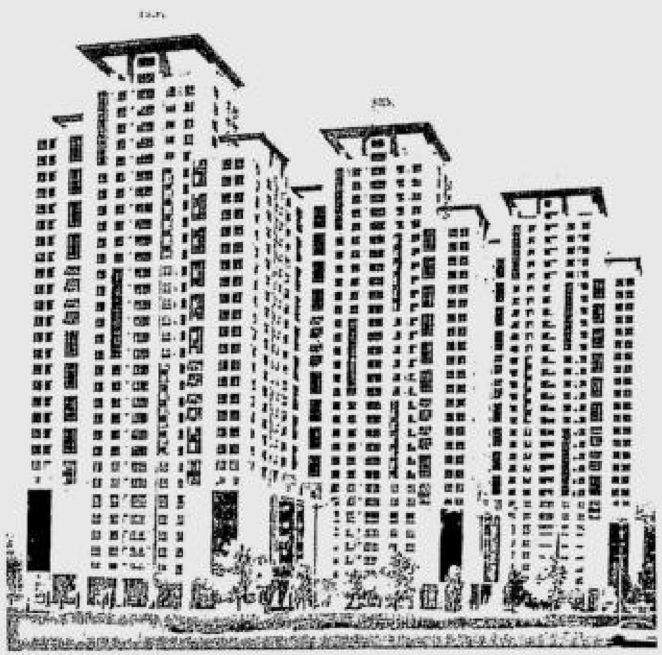
Superior living standard

For young professionals working in Makati, the dream of an urban residence in the heart of the business district with the facilities and amenities for healthful, quality living is about to be fulfilled. The Columns, Ayala Avenue will provide a superior living standard for starting families and young up-and-comers on the cusp of making it.

The launch for The Columns, Ayala Avenue is additionally auspicious at the beginning of the Chinese Year of the Goat. The Goat signifies love of beauty, peaceful oneness with nature, and good fortune in matters of wealth, all of which can also be said of The Columns, Ayala Avenue.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue adds to the beauty of the dramatic Makati skyline. Its three 23-story towers are angled to catch the rays of the morning sun and evade the afternoon heat. Its seven-story podium level conceals ample residential parking space behind large sculpture friezes tinted lucky red. Terra-cotta styling lines the windows, bays and balconies on three sides. On the ground floor, three grand lobbies unite Asian inspiration with modern sophistication. Inside the spacious units, ceramic tile floors match with high-quality fixtures for the kitchen and bath.

One with environment



THE COLUMNS

The Columns, Ayala Avenue is designed to be one with its environment. The angling of the towers provides generous natural light, while deep notches allow a refreshing breeze to flow through the rooms without need for power-hungry air conditioning, although air-conditioning units will be provided and will run even in case of a brownout. Every room in each unit will have its own window, with the main windows proffering expansive views. Gardens surround the ground floor, with outdoor cafés and restaurants and pools leading up to the lips of the grand lobbies.

On the seventh floor, atop the podium, sits the Recreation Deck, a hanging garden above the surrounding city. A lagoon-style pool, large enough for laps and relaxing enough for naps, sits amid green gardens and seating areas. An exercise path spans the length of the deck from the pool to a large party area connected to interior function rooms.

At sunset, residents on all three sides will be treated to dramatic views of the distant mountains, the Makati skyline and the sky above Manila Bay.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue keeps prosperity in mind. Built by Community Innovations, it's the first midrange residential product with the backing of Ayala Land, the Philippines' most trusted developer. Its accommodations are based on quality and affordability. It will be managed by Ayala Property Management Corp., ensuring top-notch service.

The podium level will host upscale shops and restaurants on its ground floor, open to the public, while the private residential entrances will be staffed by uniformed security personnel 24 hours a day.

Adjoining the recreation deck, the business of prosperity unites with its enjoyment, with a business center, meeting rooms, function rooms, and conversation areas next to a gym, a game room (with mini theater) and even a daycare center for the residents' children.

Its studio, single, and double-bedroom units offer outstanding location and amenities at prices within reach of up-and-coming professionals and young families. They are also excellent investment opportunities with room for future growth.

OSG hits Caloocan dubious land titles

SOLICITOR General Alfredo L. Benipayo has branded as "highly irregular" the recent issuance by Caloocan City registrar of deeds Regulo Coloma of 10 new transfer certificates of title to the 10 alleged heirs of Spanish lady Maria de la Concepcion Vidal derived from a nonexistent Original Certificate of Title 994 allegedly registered on April 19,1917.

Thus, the Office of the Solicitor General reaffirmed the national government's firm policy against the continuing issuance of dubious and irregular transfer certificates of title overlapping properties previously titled some 40 to 70 years earlier in the long-defunct Maysilo Estate.

The estate used to comprise about half of Caloocan City and Malabon combined, and a portion of Quezon City.

Open defiance

In a memorandum with the Branch 121 Regional Trial Court at Caloocan City, Benipayo said Coloma openly defied the standing Department of Justice and Land Registration Authority policy against the registration of new titles supposedly derived from the OCT 994 of April 19,1917. This original certificate of title was found "nonexistent, a fabrication" of the two top registry officials.

Benipayo, with Assistant Solicitor General Maria Aurora P. Cortes and Solicitor Gabriel Francisco A. Ramirez Jr., cited the findings of two Senate committees and the Department of Justice composite fact-finding committee. The conclusive finding was that there is only one OCT 994 in the old Maysilo Estate which was issued by the Rizal registry of deeds on May 3, 1917 and not on April 19, 1917.

The OSG filed the memorandum with the court in response to Coloma's application for preliminary injunction to block his temporary transfer to the LRA main office to face an investigation of a complaint against him for issuing the irregular Maysilo Estate titles. But the injunction issued by Judge Adoracion Angeles would not stop the LRA investigation of Coloma.

Fabrication

BENIPAYO

The supposed OCT 994 issued or registered on April 19, 19197, both Senate and the DOJ reports concluded, was a fabrication of then Caloocan City registrar of deeds Yolanda Alfonso and deputy registrar of deeds Norberto Vasquez. The two were charged with having "acted maliciously, fraudulently and in bad faith" by issuing certifications or written statements that OCT 994 with relevance to the long-defunct Maysilo Estate was registered on April 19, 1917, when they knew that the correct date of registration was May 3, 1917."

After exhaustive administrative investigations, Alfonso and Vasquez were dismissed from the service for their wrong doing. Coloma, appointed by then President Estrada to Alfonso's position, it was pointed out, was doing exactly what Alfonso and Vasquez did during their time.

Overlapping

The solicitor general said Coloma was aware of the issuance of LRA Circular No. 97-11 to all registrars of deeds and their deputies to deny registration or issuance of a title even if there is a court order, which would result in overlapping of previously titled property or when the issuance would be highly irregular.

The LRA circular said if the court should insist that its order be implemented even after its attention had been called by the registrar of deeds to an overlapping of the title to be issued with an existing one or to any other irregularity, the registrar is "required to immediately elevate the matter *en consulta* to the LRA" so the solicitor general may file the proper judicial action.

The circular was issued in response to a DOJ directive in its First Indorsement in 1997 as a result of the investigation conducted by the DOJ composite fact-finding committee on the Maysilo land titling irregularities.

In a letter to incumbent LRA Administrator Bernardo Ulep, Coloma had even inquired about the LRA's policy stand on the Maysilo titling irregularities investigated by the Senate and the DOJ.

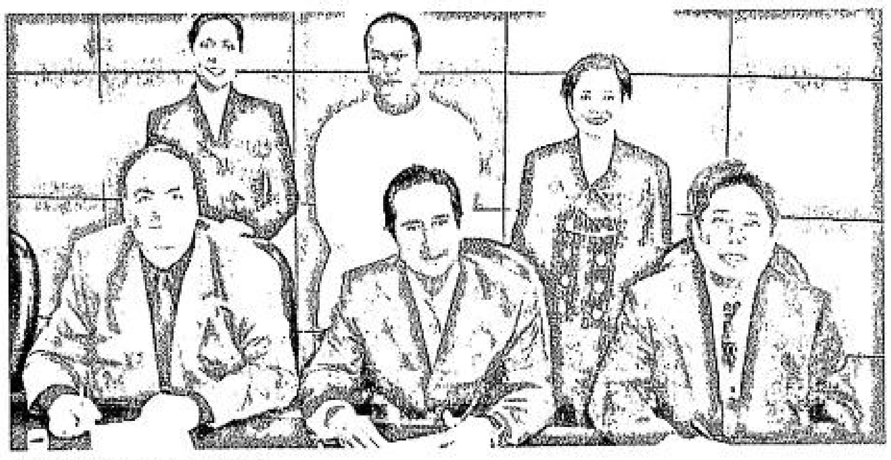
No backing out

In his reply to Coloma's query, Ulep categorically stated there is no backing out of the policy to stop the issuance of fraudulent Maysilo titles, "being in accord with the LRA's mandate to protect the integrity and stability of the Torrens system." Ulep cited the DOJ investigation finding that "there is only one OCT 994 which was registered by the Rizal register of deeds on May 3, 1917 (and not on April 19, 1917)."

But in the first-ever case of open defiance by a registrar of deeds of LRA officials and office policies, Coloma recently implemented an order of the regional trial court, Branch 120, in Civil Case No. C-424 (Bartolome Rivera, et al. vs Isabel Gil de Sola, et al.). Issued on Jan. 8, 1998, the court order directed the issuance to the heirs of decedent Vidal of transfer certificates of title derived from OCT 994 allegedly registered on April 19, 1917 involving the Maysilo Estate.

Then LRA Administrator Alfredo R. Enriquez on March 28, 2000 denied the request of lawyer F. V. Faylona for the LRA to direct the registers of deeds of Caloocan City and Quezon City to comply with the court order. The denial was based on the DOJ directive of Sept. 22, 1997 following the DOJ full-dress investigation of the Maysilo titling irregularities.

Thus, the solicitor general said Coloma "in complete disregard of the standing office policy regarding issuance of titles involving the Maysilo Estate and in defiance of the valid and legal directives of his superior, including those embodied in the letter-reply of Ulep dated April 3, 2002," issued the 10 anomalous titles to alleged heirs of Spanish lady Vidal.



CONTRACT SIGNING
Latest US call center Connect2 Phils. Inc. signs lease contract with Net One Center, a flagship project of 19-1 Realty in Bonifacio Global City. Signing the contract, from left, are William Sommerfield, managing director, Connect2 Phils. Inc.; Jacques Dupasquier, chair, 19-1 Realty; and Carlos S. Rufino, director, 19-1 Realty. Witnessing the signing, from left, are Gigi Mojica, director for international relations, Connect2 Phils.; Rafael Montilla, associate, FPD Savills; and Stella D. Rufino, marketing director, 19-1 Realty.

Finance firm cancels foreclosure of urban poor home mortgages

By Romulo Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

BIÑAN, Laguna—The National Home Mortgage and Finance Corp. has canceled the pending foreclosure of the mortgaged property of the South Metro urban poor homeowners, making them heave a sigh of relief and rejoice.

Evangeline B. Pallones, president of the Sagip Tahanan at Kabuhayan ng Laguna Inc., said NHMFC president Angelico Salud promised before some 1,000 protesting homeowners during a rally on Friday that foreclosure proceedings would not be implemented against members of the STKLI.

Pallones said Salud emphasized, however, that only the existing STKLI members who are faithful in paying P1,000 as their alternative monthly amortization payment will be given the privilege not to be subjected to foreclosure.

No more newcomers or incoming STKLI recruits would receive the same privilege, Pallones quoted Salud as saying.

Pallones told the INQUIRER that the rally, which started at about 8 a.m., was divided into two groups. One went to Edsa and the other group marched toward Monumento.

She said they went back to the streets to protest what they consider government's insensitivity to the plight of the poor residents in Laguna, Cavite, Rizal and nearby towns.

Appeal

Calling the rally a "Family Day," Pallones said the NHMFC is too harsh to implement foreclosure orders without first issuing clear guidelines."

Yolanda Santos, one of the STKLI leaders, told the INQUIRER during that rally that there are now more than 1,000 homeowners from 38 subdivisions in Laguna, Cavite and Muntinlupa City whose units are already being sold by the housing agency to private buyers without their knowledge.

Santos said she joined her fellow South Metro homeowners who marched to Mendiola to appeal before housing authorities, particularly Secretary Mike Defensor to give them a break by helping ease their predicament.

Requests

Pallones earlier showed the INQUIRER their organization's comments and suggestions on the proposed house bill that would establish a specialized and low-cost housing loan restructuring program, providing the mechanism therefore, and for other purposes.

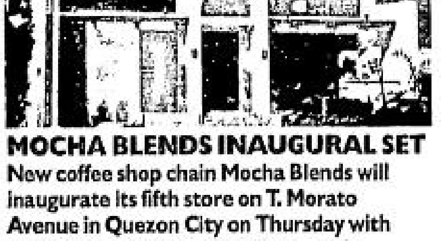
The group requested, among others, the stoppage of foreclosure (proceedings) by all housing agencies while awaiting moratorium; the lowering of the monthly amortization to not more than P1,000 for a period of five years upon receipt of the application with the unserviced portion to be paid without interest on the last five years of the extended term, provided that failure on the part of the borrower under this option to pay 12 consecutive amortizations during the five-year period shall result in the surrender of this property without need of judicial proceedings.

Measures

Recently, the following measures were proposed by members of Congress: House Resolution 45 urging the implementation of Republic Act 8501, otherwise known as the "Housing Loan Condonation Act of 1998," introduced by Rep. Jose G. Solis.

The other measures are House Bills 2740 and 4748 both seeking to provide a three-year moratorium on the foreclosure of mortgage housing units to any of the government institutions and agencies involved in the national shelter program, introduced by Representatives Prospero C. Nograles and Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon.

The other measure is House Bill 4264 seeking to provide a three-year moratorium on all low-cost housing loans with any of the government institutions and agencies in the national shelter program, amending for the purpose RA 8501, introduced by Rep. Juan Miguel F. Zubiri.



MOCHA BLENDS INAUGURAL SET
New coffee shop chain Mocha Blends will inaugurate its fifth store on T. Morato Avenue in Quezon City on Thursday with Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr., Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. and show-biz luminary Piolo Pascual topping the list of guests. The shop, owned and operated by Edsa Agro Industrial Corp., is built using modern European architecture dominated with old rose and green colors.

Metro Manila gets 44% of informal home loans

AS THE REGIONS hosting the biggest concentration of homeless urban poor, Metro Manila (National Capital Region) and Southern Luzon (Region 4) got the lion share of 6 percent interest-bearing loans used for the acquisition of land tenure and housing by informal settlers granted last year under the Community Mortgage Program.

This was announced by lawyer Angelico T. Salud, president of National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. and CMP program administrator, as contained in a report to Housing Secretary Michael T. Defensor, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

Of the P484.6-million CMP loans released to 12,331 family benificiaries in 97 informal sector housing sites nationwide, Metro Manila's share was a whopping P213.6-million, comprising 44 percent of the total, while Southern Luzon got P103.8 million, equivalent to 21.4 percent, with the two regions accounting for 65 percent of total loans granted, Salud said.

Luzon regions, except Metro Manila, garnered total loans of P165.8 million (34.21 percent), consisting of Region 2's P10.3-million (0.2); Region 3, P49.8-million (one percent); Region 4, P103.8 million (21.4 percent); and Region 5, P1.8-million (0.03 percent).

With Metro Manila, Luzon regions netted combined loans of P379.4 million, accounting for 78 percent of total loans, leaving the balance of P105 million comprising 21.7 percent, for the rest of the country.

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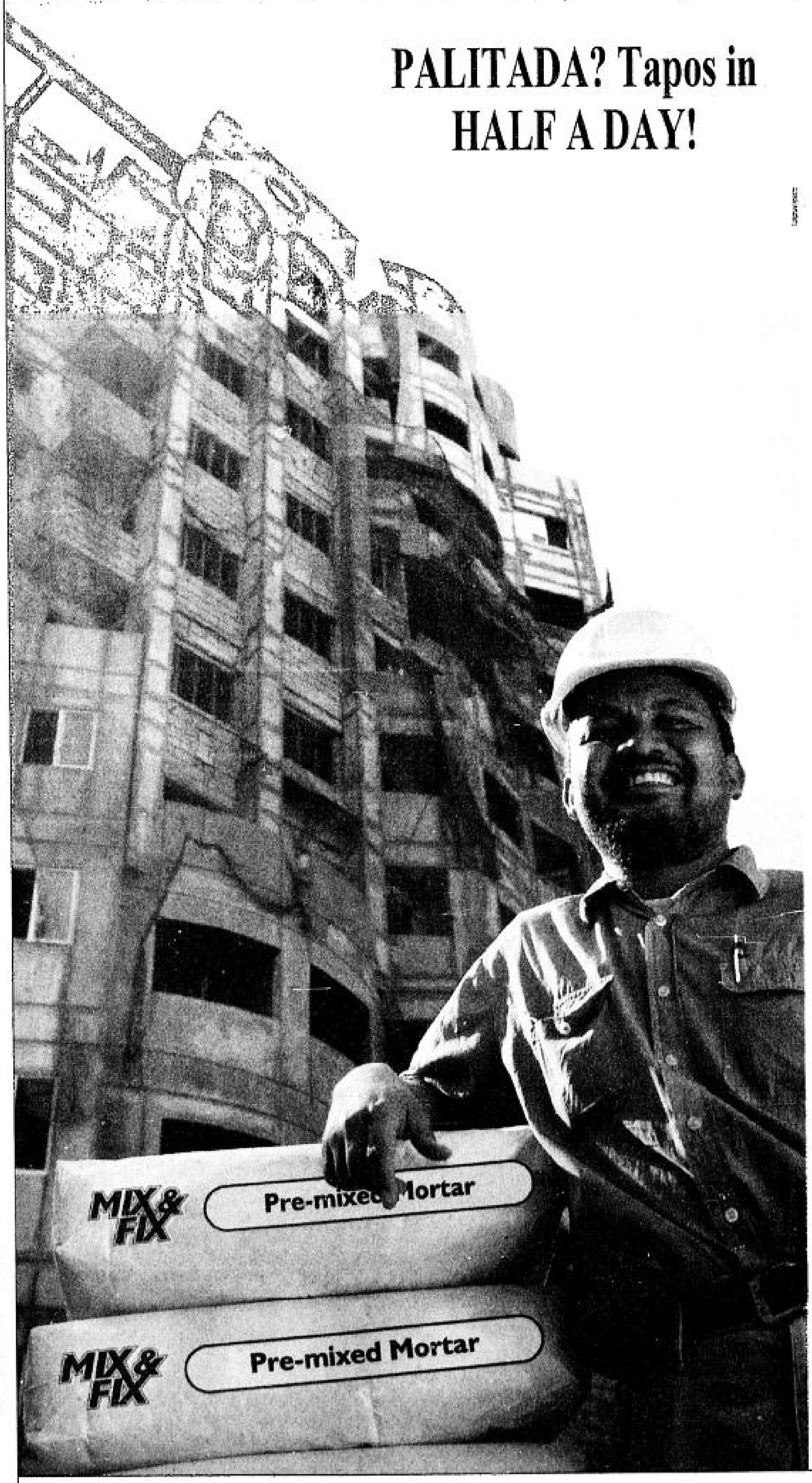

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BUSINESS

PROCUREMENT SNAG

Napocor, IPPs running out of coal

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COAL-FIRED power plants of the National Power Corp. and its independent power producers have only a month's worth of fuel left, and Napocor has yet to secure any contract for fresh supplies.

"Our coal supply is already at a critical level," a Napocor official familiar with the matter said. "We can exercise contract options, which can provide an additional (260,000 metric tons)."

The official said the optional shipments would come from coal mines in China.

Napocor has again reset the first of a series of contract auctions for Wednesday, he said.

The schedule for the auctions has been revised at least four times.

The first time the auctions were postponed was in November. That auction was postponed because of an executive order requiring companies bidding for government contracts to be at least 60-percent Filipino-owned.

This original schedule was designed such that deliveries of fresh supplies would be coming in by early January.

Napocor found a way to skirt the 60-percent rule, with one allowing foreign companies to bid for government contracts provided that Filipino companies were accorded the same privileges in the bidders home countries.

The state-run power firm had to again put off the contract auctions, as no firm qualified to bid.

Napocor estimates that it needs around 2.67 million metric tons of fuel for its coal-fired power plants in Sual, Pangasinan; Pagbilao, Quezon; Masinloc, Zambales; and Naga, Cebu.

Napocor's Calaca plant in Batangas obtains its fuel supply from the Semirara Mining Corp. in Antique.

Coal plants account for about 40 percent of all power generated in the country.

Gov't to pour ₱5B into cash-strapped housing agency

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE GOVERNMENT is looking to pour some P5 billion in the form of land and cash into the Home Guaranty Corp. to pave the way for a proposed P25-billion housing program.

Housing czar Michael Defensor said the government was aiming to provide P4 billion in land and P1 billion in cash for HGC, given that the agency had been experiencing some financial constraints.

"We are working on the money that is needed. We have identified some of the sources where we can get the money. Let's say Pag-Ibig (Home Development Mutual Fund) can park money there or maybe the DBP (Development Bank of the Philippines)," Defensor said. "It is something we have to finalize first."

Defensor said the government was considering a P25-billion housing program that would require P15 billion for housing development financing and P10 billion for mortgage-backed securities. This program, however, would require strong guarantee support from HGC.

"What is important is to strengthen HGC," Defensor added.

HGC president Gonzalo Bongolan said he welcomed any capital infusion into HGC, but that he preferred that the capital would be in liquid assets so that the state firm could automatically settle guarantee calls.

At present, the housing agency has a net worth of P5.8 billion. Its authorized guarantee capacity is 20 times its net worth or a current equivalent of P116 billion.

Malacañang order seen leveling car assembly playing field

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A MALACAÑANG order tightening the registration of imported vehicles should help level the playing field between foreign and locally assembled units, the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. has said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Executive Order 142 early this month.

The EO requires owners of imported vehicles to obtain clearances from the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs before they can register their vehicles with the Land Transportation Office. It covers motor vehicles imported between Jan. 1, 2000 and Dec. 31, 2002.

Before the President issued this order, only assemblers covered by the Motor Vehicle Development Program were required to undergo a clearance procedure as requisite for initial or renewal of registration with the LTO of their imports.

Campi secretary general Mario de Grano said MVDP members had been submitting these clearances to register their completely built-up units for years. The new EO, he said, would eliminate any advantage by non-MVDP importers.

De Grano said while the EO exempted all MVDP participants from the clearance requirement, local assemblers would still have to submit reports of their vehicle production to the LTO and secure certificates of payment of taxes and duties from the customs bureau.

ICC clears ₱9-B BOT contract

THE INTER-agency Investment Coordination Committee-technical board has approved the draft build-operate-transfer contract for the P8.7-billion Motor Vehicle Inspection System (MIVS) expansion project of the Department of Transportation and Communications.

The project, which aims to enhance road safety and minimize excessive vehicular smoke emissions, has been endorsed to the Cabinet-level ICC for second-pass approval, the National Economic and Development Authority announced yesterday.

The MIVS project is part of a P12.6-billion infrastructure package granted with first-pass approval by the ICC, the state agency that handles the country's public investment program.

The DOTC's MIVS expansion project envisions the establishment of infrastructure and equipment to support a nationwide motor vehicle inspection system for roadworthiness and smoke emission.

The project involves the construction of 208 inspection lanes throughout the country.

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Fitness

How exercise affects fertility

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

TWO female readers have written me, asking if exercises can damage one's reproductive system.

"I am 34 years old and have been attending aerobics classes in the gym. I am planning to get pregnant this year and I am concerned that the strenuous exercise will minimize my chance of getting pregnant. I also want to trim down my body fat (especially in the abdomen) but I know I have to increase my exercise and/or lessen my food intake. I hope you can feature an article regarding this."

"Hi! I've read from a certain article that kickboxing or taebo can be harmful to the ovaries. Is this true? Are there any side effects from this workout that are dangerous for the reproductive system? I hope I'll get some information regarding this because I'm a regular exerciser who does taebo at least two times a week. A little scary for someone like me who's 24 years old and just about to get married, isn't it?"

I could not find any data whatsoever implicating taebo or kickboxing with damaging any part of the reproductive system. However, body weight and exercise can have an effect on getting pregnant. According to the American Society of Reproductive Medicine, regular exercise and a healthy diet enhance fertility by keeping body weight at normal levels and by relieving stress and anxiety.

On the other hand, excessive amounts of exercise can be a cause of infertility because it can lead to amenorrhea (absence of menstruation) in women and a lowered sperm count in men.

Body weight

It has been noted that women who are very thin and women who are obese have a difficult time conceiving. Some studies have found that 12 percent of infertility cases are due to being underweight or overweight. This is probably because body fat plays a role in reproduction. The sex hormones are "lipid soluble," meaning they dissolve in fat but not in water. Thus, they are stored in the fatty tissues of the body.

Women with very low fat levels can become estrogen deficient while women who are obese can have too much stored estrogen. Both situations can affect the normal menstrual cycle. Menstruation can become irregular or stop altogether. In some cases, even if the cycle appears normal, there is no ovulation.

Being overweight can cause insulin resistance, which increases insulin levels. This can cause the ovaries to stop releasing eggs. Exercise can help because it reduces blood sugar levels and, therefore, the pancreas doesn't need to release as much insulin.

How thin is too thin and how fat do you have to be to affect your chances of getting pregnant? Some experts say that if your weight is 85 percent lower than the normal weight range, you are too thin; if it is 120 percent higher than normal, you are too fat. However, there are some studies that show that even a slight increase in being overweight is associated with a marked increase in fertility problems.

You can find out if you are within the normal weight range by using the Body Mass Index method or BMI. To calculate your exact BMI, multiply your weight (in pounds) by 705, divide the result by your height in inches, and divide that result by your height again. A normal BMI is between 19 and 25, the overweight range is between 25 and 29, and the obese range is 30 and over.

Not all thin or obese women have a problem conceiving. Weight seems to only become a problem with regard to fertility if it disrupts the menstrual cycle. However, remember that it is possible to menstruate without ovulating so you should see a doctor if you are having a hard time getting pregnant and you are under- or overweight.

Even if being too thin or too fat does not cause fertility problems for you, both conditions are still not healthy for pregnancy.

If a woman is naturally thin because of inheriting a fast metabolism or body type (slim model-like figure called ectomorph) but she eats normally and exercises in moderation, this is not cause for concern. But if she is thin because of excessive exercise and poor eating habits, this can affect the normal growth and development of her fetus because she will tend to continue this behavior during the pregnancy.

Obese women tend to have health problems like high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels and insulin resistance. These conditions can get exacerbated during pregnancy and lead to complications that are dangerous to both the mother and the fetus.

As for men, being too thin can decrease sperm function or lower sperm count. Currently, there is not enough scientific data on how being overweight can affect a man's sperm production.

Excessive exercise

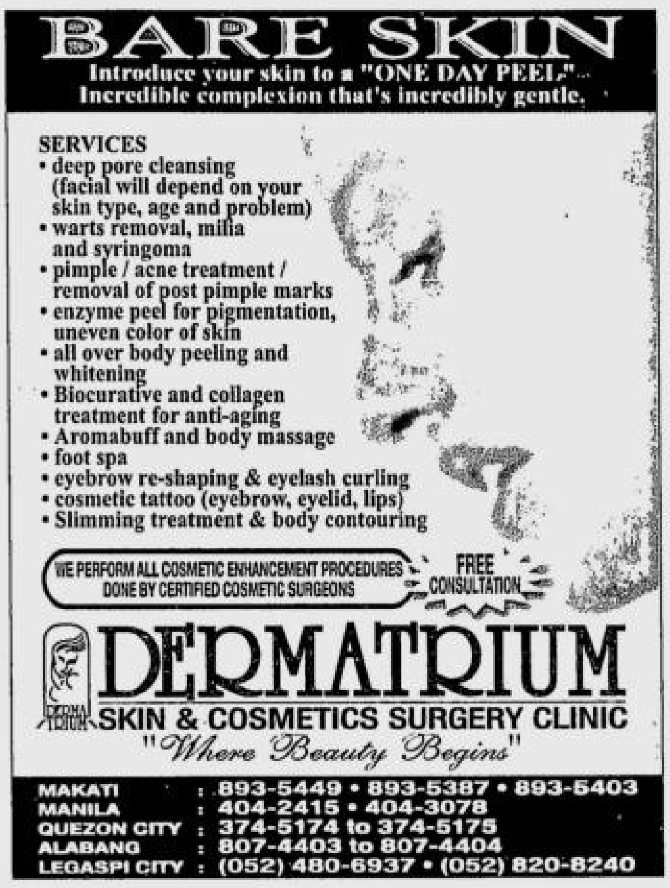
How can you tell if exercise is excessive? Just because a person works out several hours a day (like many athletes, both amateur and professional) does not automatically mean that s/he is exercising too much. People are different and what is too much exercise for one person is just a "warm-up" for another.

The best way to find out if you are doing too much exercise is to be on the lookout for the classic symptoms of overtraining.

Physical symptoms include decline in performance, inability to maintain exercise program, chronic fatigue, elevated resting heart rate, hormonal changes, slower heart rate recovery, elevated blood pressure, persistent muscle soreness, loss of appetite, unexplained loss of weight, headaches, heavy legged feeling, frequent colds and flu, gastrointestinal disturbances and menstrual ir-

HOW/ C3

Regular exercise and a healthy diet enhance fertility by keeping body weight at normal levels



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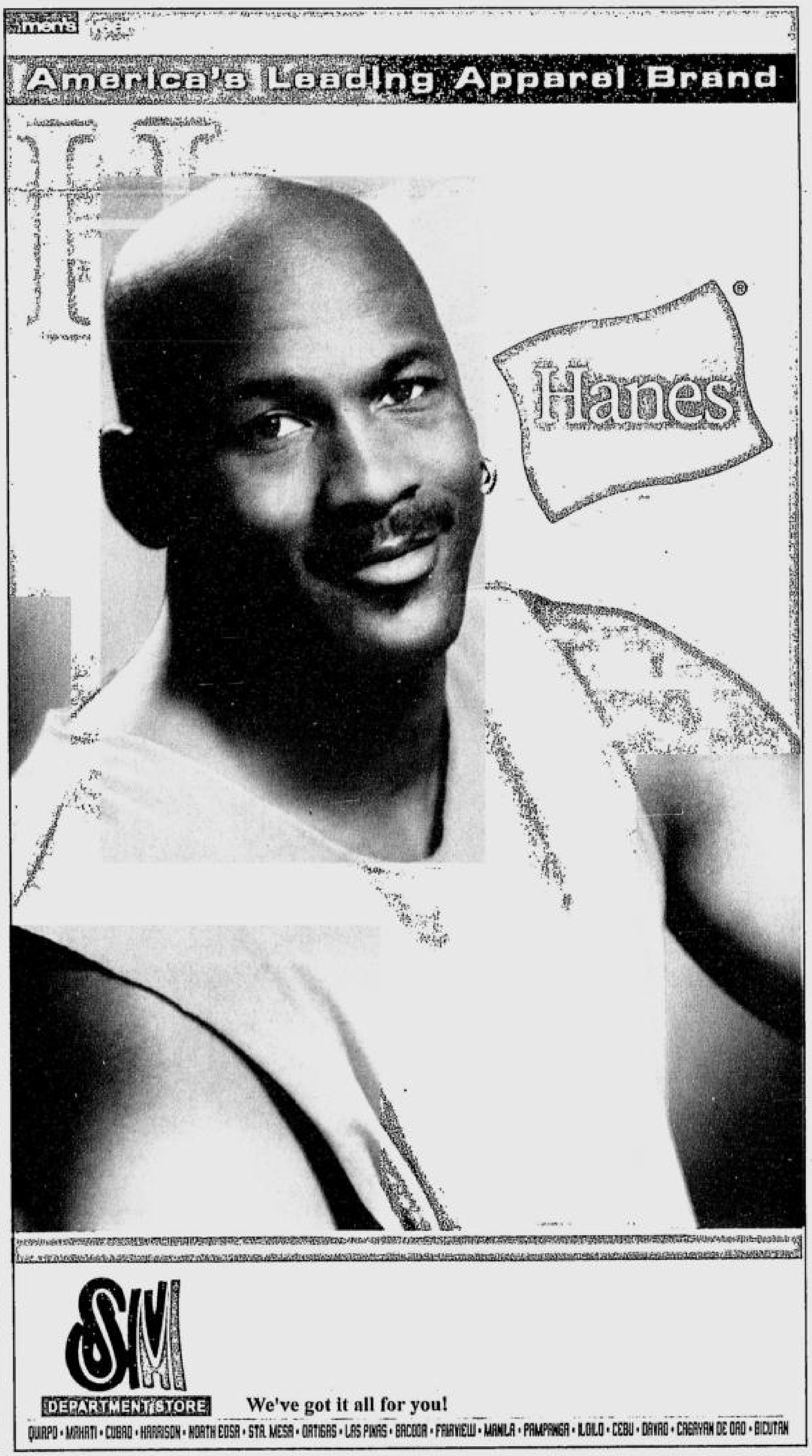

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A healer who makes *scents*

A self-taught holistic therapist, Nelly Grosjean shares the amazing powers of essential oils

IT is in this idyllic setting of lush greens, bubbling springs and tropical hideaway that we first "catch scent" of Nelly Grosjean. She smells of roses and lavender. She soothes and energizes.

SHE has lectured all over the world and has authored a book on aromatheraphy as well.

By Jillian Saldana
Contributor
Photos by Lynett Villariba

THERE is a Frenchwoman who often visits The Farm at San Benito. They say she walks with the scent of flowers. That's because Nelly Grosjean dabs on and sprays essential oils that revitalize and restore harmony to her body.

The Farm at San Benito is not really a farm. There are no pigs or chickens, but there is an organic vegetable patch. Owned by Perla and Eckard Rempe, The Farm is a boutique health and wellness resort located at the foothills of Mt. Malarayat in Lipa, Batangas.

It is not a spa in the way that spas are known these days. Rather, this luxurious tropical hideaway serves as a sanctuary for guests who seek the balance and harmony they have lost in this stressful world. The farm offers a variety of activities that rejuvenate mind, body and spirit-from basic massage therapies to fully structured weeks-long alternative healing programs. The facilities include a gourmet restaurant, several juice bars, a jungle trail, four private swimming pools, a jungle gym, a spa with seven treatment rooms, healing water springs, an amphitheater, a library and orchidarium, and an extensive network of private gardens.

Roses and lavender

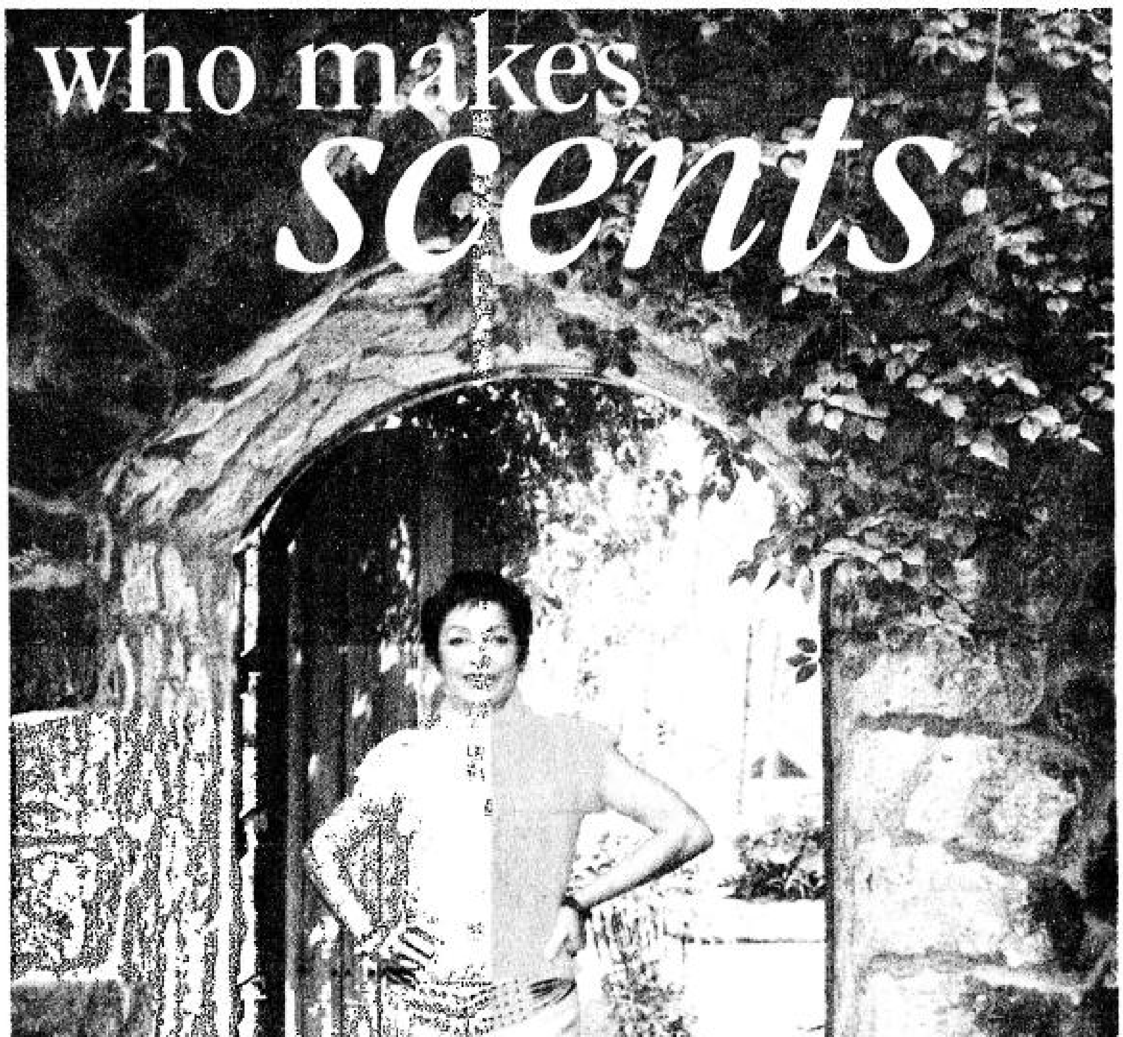
It is in this idyllic setting of lush greens, running water and an infinity pool that we first "catch scent" of Grosjean. She smells of roses and lavender. She soothes and energizes, which, she later tells us, is her life work.

"In England, aromatherapy is dispensed by holistic practitioners as a massage technique with the help of essential oils," says Grosjean, who's in her late 40s, looks like she's in her 30s, and moves like she's in her 20s.

"In France, aromatherapy deals with the treatment of ailments using essential oils," she says. "The specialist in aromatherapy is a medical doctor, a health practitioner or a naturopath. He does not use massage techniques; he prescribes essential oils—this is the aromatherapy I practice."

In her book, "Aromatherapy: Essential Oils for your Health," Grosjean defines aromatherapy as "etymologically" the treatment of ailments (therapy) with aromas (essences of aromatic plants).

She explains: "Aromatherapy is one of the techniques of holistic, alternative of natural medicine. It can be as much preventive as curative. Aromatherapy cures, straightens and re-balances the whole body."



GROSJEAN, whose Museum of Aromas and Perfumes in Provençe, France, is the only one of its kind in the world, calls herself an alchemist of scents.

Lick and live

Grosjean shares the amazing powers of essential oils, which she herself distills from her organic garden of aromatic plants, and blends in her laboratory in Provençe.

"When you start drinking, breathing in, or rubbing essential oils on your skin, you will discover that aromatherapy is a true science and an art de vivre, which nurtures your body and soul in the most pleasurable way," she says.

Her products, which are available at The Farm and can be ordered via her website, include natural aromatic oils, natural ambience perfumes, blends for diffusers, 12 aromatic frictions, aromatic beauty oils and organic hydrosols.

"Frictions," which are aromatic blends of different essential oils, are her specialty. "My 12 frictions store and release the vital elements of nature. They are synergetic preparations consisting entirely of 100-percent essential oils," she says.

She takes a tiny bottle, uncaps it and dabs a small amount at the back of our right hand and convinces this writer to lick it. It tastes like baby oil with flowers.

"This is APH. It is an energizer for the adrenal system. It's good for fatigue, bad memory and low sexual drive. It contains essential oils of rosemary, pine, lavender, savory, coriander, ylang-ylang, mint, oregano and cinnamon," she explains.

"When you apply essential oils to your skin, they penetrate the blood and lymph within four hours. For instance, if you apply rose geranium, which energizes the cortical-suprarenal, on your skin, your pee will also smell like rose geranium!"

Aromatic blends

Nelly's 11 other frictions are:

NER—Relaxes the nervous system, helps induce sleep and soothes anxieties.

RES—Prevents winter health problems, stops chills, colds, flu, bronchitis and asthma.

RHU—Relieves pain, drains kidneys, soothes rheumatism.

VIT—Ideal morning friction, a tonic for students and athletes, gives vitality.

CEL—Good for the figure, swollen and tired legs, hot and cold feet, difficult circulation.

DIG—Good for slow and difficult digestion, miracle cure for flatulence.

HAR—Friction harmonizer for the physical mind and the spirit, for inner calm, meditation, creativity and yoga.

MIN—Good for elimination, weight control, drains liver and gall bladder.

106—Strengthens all kinds of hair and roots.

107—Powerful facial treatment, strong anti-wrinkle with rose essential oils.

108—Addresses circulation, excessive perspiration, heavy legs, hot feet, itching, cellulite, headache and disturbed periods.

According to Grosjean, frictions are easily available, since you don't need a prescription from a naturopath. They're even easier to use. Put 20 drops of the chosen friction on the palm of your hands and rub gently on the thorax and plexus (where it often hurts right underneath the sternum), at the back of your neck (nape), the base of your spine (sacrum) and the soles of your feet. This applies to all the blends except for 106, 107, CEL and 108, which should be applied on the concerned areas like hair, face, stomach, legs and feet. Do this once or three times a day for a period of three weeks to three months.

You can also drink the essential oils as an aromatic cocktail, add a few drops to your salad, bath or massage oils, or you can lick a drop from the back of your hand three or four times a day.

"We have been making frictions for more than 20 years now and they bring rapid, amazing results. They have harmonizing, rebalancing, tonic and relaxing effects and provide new energy that the body needs to handle external aggression," Grosjean says.

The Nelly Grosjean aromatherapy products are available at The Farm at San Benito, Lipa, Batangas. Call (043) 757-2951. You can order from her website: www.vicarome.com

SHE is a consultant for The Farm at San Benito, where she is helping to develop a local line of natural therapeutic plant essences and oils.

Holistic therapist

Grosjean knows her essential oils. She is a self-taught holistic therapist with more than 20 years of experience in aromatherapy. Her parents were pioneers in naturopathy and established the first body-shaping centers on the Franco-Swiss border. She remembers growing up amid herb and flower gardens. She has a degree in naturopathic medicine.

Twenty years ago, Grosjean established the Laboratoire Vie'Arôme, which distributes natural aromatic products worldwide.

Situated in Graveson-en-Provençe, Southern France, the compound has a laboratory, Musée des Arômes et du Parfum (a museum dedicated to the history of aromatherapy) and Jardin au Carré des Simples (an experimental garden of aromatic herbs cultivated with the standards of organic agriculture).

Grosjean is a leading authority in her field, and has written a number of books in French and English. She gives seminars, lectures and consultations, and travels extensively. She has brought her brand of aromatherapy to Australia, Indonesia, Japan and now, the Philippines.

How exercise affects fertility

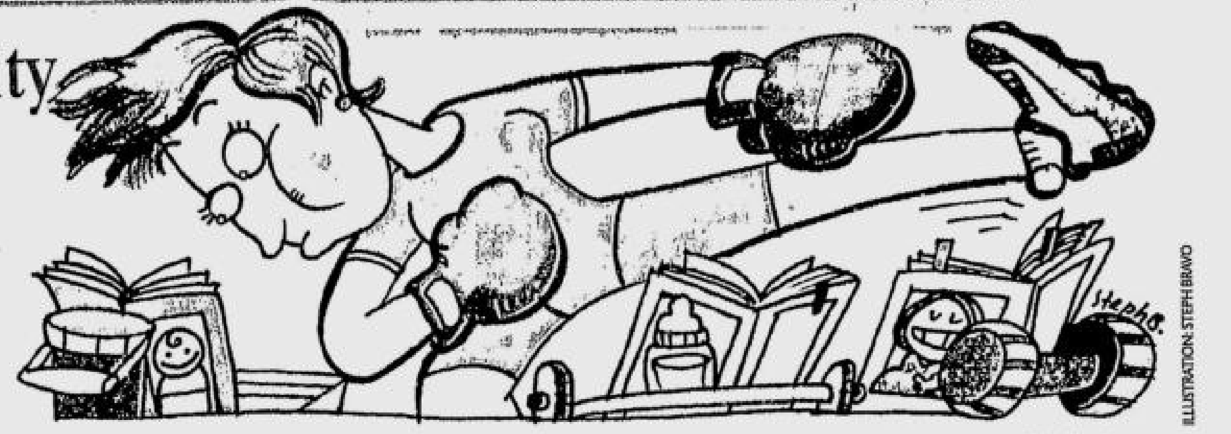


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

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Psychological symptoms include depression, decreased self-confidence, mood changes, apathy, lethargy, low motivation, lack of concentration, anxiety, sleep disturbance, irritability/excitability, boredom, inability to relax, anger/aggressiveness.

So if you are engaging in vigorous exercise but are not experiencing any of the symptoms mentioned above, you should be okay. Some fertility specialists, however, believe that regardless of not having overtraining symptoms, women who exercise strenuously for more than seven hours a week can experience higher rates of fertility problems.

In women, excessive exercise coupled with a very low calorie intake leads to a lowered body fat level, which in turn leads to estrogen deficiency. The result is a seemingly normal menstrual cycle without ovulation, irregular periods or no periods at all. This situation happens most often to female athletes. However, researchers have found that even if the athlete trains for many hours and has a low body fat level, if she takes in enough calories to make up for the amount of energy burned and gets enough rest, she can avoid menstrual problems. The lesson here is that you need to eat enough to fuel your strenuous workouts.

Another way that scientists believe too much exercise can affect fertility is because endorphins, feel-good chemicals similar to morphine that are released by the brain during exercise, can increase prolactin levels. Prolactin is a hormone the body uses to produce breast milk, which can interfere with ovulation (that's why many women don't become pregnant while they are breastfeeding).

In men, scientists believe that excessive exercise can reduce the sperm count for two reasons. One, strenuous exercise can cause heat to build up around the testicles. Two, too much exercise can produce high levels of adrenal hormones, which can lower testosterone.

The body keeps the testicles about half a degree cooler than core temperature because the sperm is sensitive to increased heat. Men who want to impregnate their partners should avoid anything that raises the temperature of their scrotum. This means they should avoid hot tubs, saunas, steam rooms, too tight underwear, long driving trips and hot working conditions (like working in ship's engine room).

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Damaged sperm can still fertilize an egg and this can cause birth defects, stillbirths and miscarriages. So it's important that the male partner, and not just the female, take care of their reproductive organs. Remember, it takes three months for sperm to develop. So the sperm cells you have today are a product of your lifestyle three months ago.

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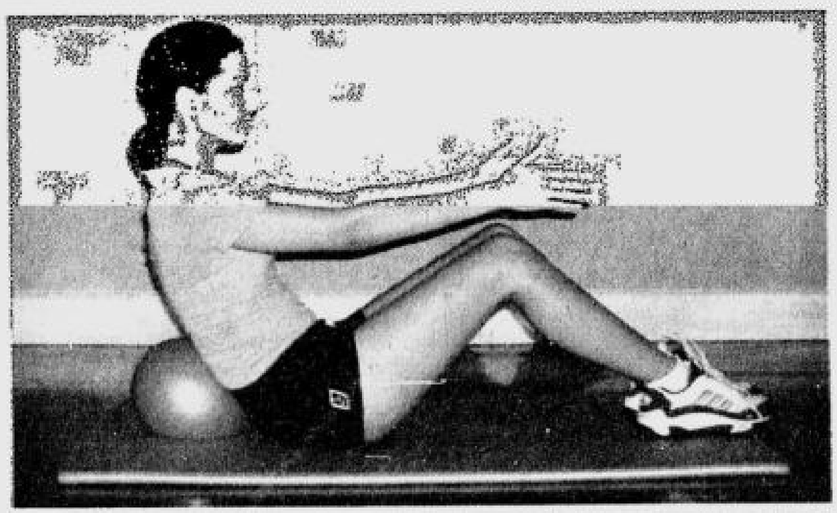
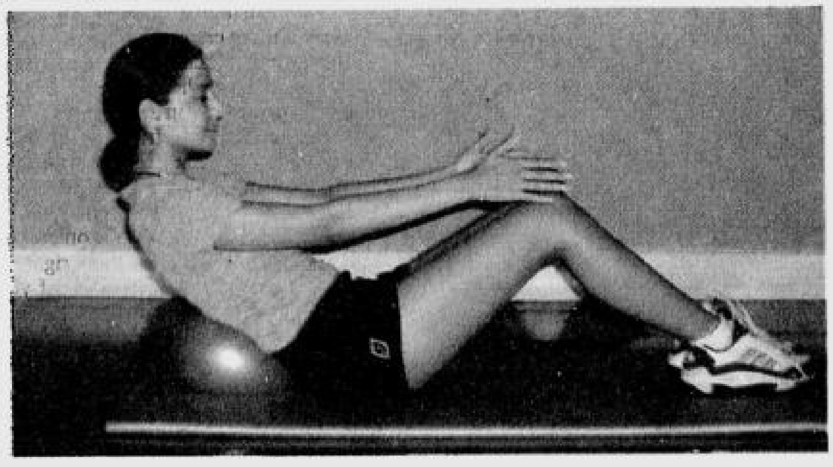
EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Ab crunch with ball lumbar support





STRENGTHENS the abdominal muscles.

Equipment:
Exercise mat, rubber or plastic ball. Another option is to use a medicine ball.

Exercise technique:

1. Sit down with knees bent. Place the ball behind your lower back and lean back against it until your body is in an inclined position.
2. Hold your arms in front of you at shoulder level with your palms facing each other.
3. Contract your abdominal muscles and slightly curl your upper body while maintaining contact with the ball.
4. Return to starting position.

Performance tips:

1. Exhale as you curl forward; inhale as you return to starting point.
2. Consciously contract your abdominal muscles to initiate the curl rather than just propelling your upper body forward. As you contract your abs, press your lower back into the ball.
3. Maintain contact between your lower back and the ball throughout the exercise.

Repetitions:
Do 5-10 repetitions.

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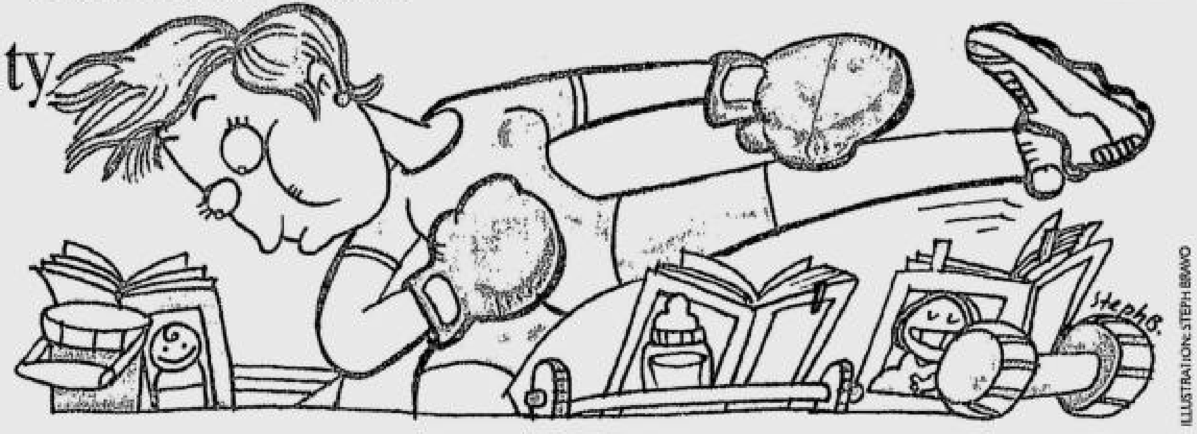

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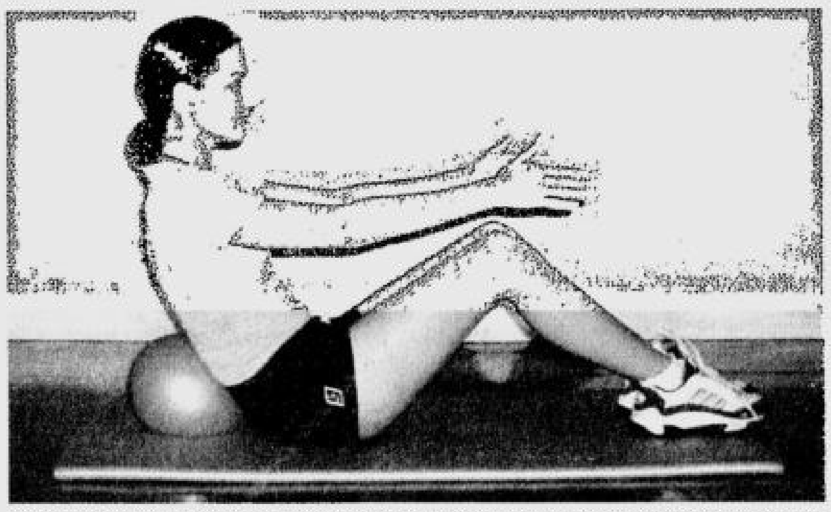

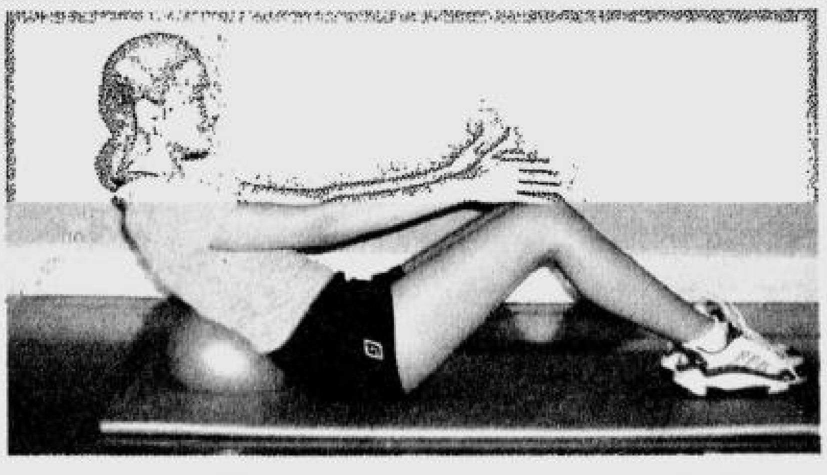

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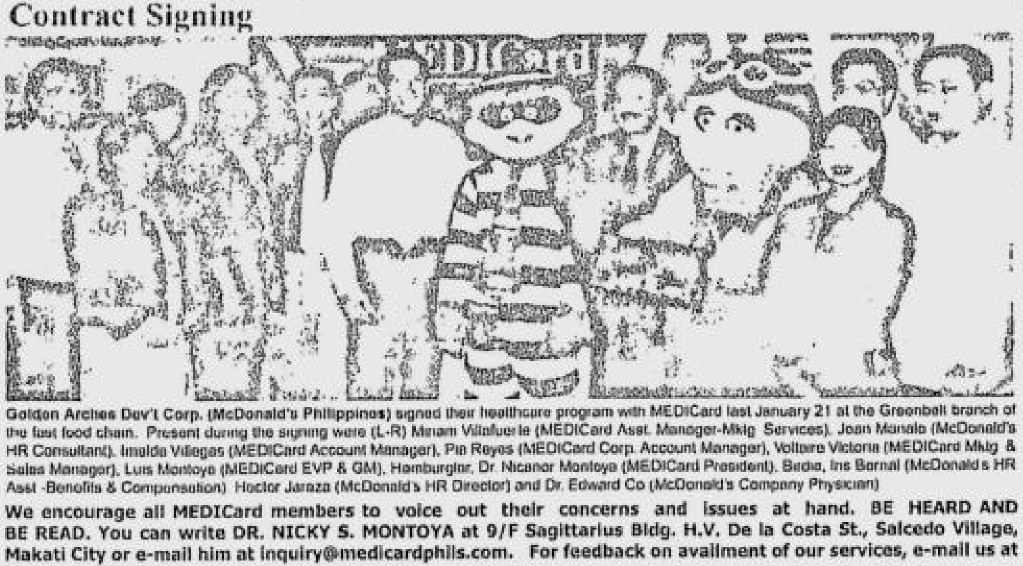

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Readers' reactions to series on reincarnation

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

AS anticipated, I received impassioned reactions to my Dec. 17, 24 and 31, 2002 series of columns on reincarnation from some religious fanatics who believe they alone have the correct answers to life's deepest mysteries and questions. They quote the Bible as if it is the only one infallible guide to every question, without verifying how this book came to be written and compiled.

One intellectually smug reader castigated the two SVD priests who interviewed me about reincarnation "for failing to defend the word of God." He quoted a series of passages in the Bible saying in affect that the dead will never come back and that there is only one life given to us.

Religious fanatics like this reader are so blinded by their belief system that it is impossible for them to consider arguments or evidence that go against their beliefs. Their line of thinking goes like this: "I have made up my mind, don't bother me with facts!"

That reader never commented on the two important scientific studies I mentioned which were done by Doctors Ian Stevenson and Helen Wambach regarding this subject. These facts are completely ignored or set aside. People like him can never grow intellectually anymore. And neither can they think logically and objectively. As the Indian spiritual teacher and modern mystic Jiddu Khnisnamurti said, "When thinking starts with a conclusion, thinking stops."

The greatest English essayist and philosopher, Francis Bacon, likewise observed the tendency of the human mind to stick to its own conclusion and ignore all contrary views that may challenge it. He said: "The human understanding, when it once adopted an opinion (either as being the received opinion or as being agreeable to itself) draws all things else to support and agree with it. And though there be greater number and weight of instances to be found on the other side, yet these it either neglects and despises, or also by some distinction sets aside and rejects; in order that by this great and pernicious predetermination the authority of its former conclusions remain inviolate."

Indeed, the trouble with religious fanatics and zealots is that none of them take the trouble to study the origin or basis of their most cherished convictions. They like to continue to believe what they have been accustomed to accept as true (for example, "Man only lives once," or "The Bible alone is the word of God"), and the resentment aroused when doubt is cast upon any of their assumptions lead them to seek every manner of excuse or argument for clinging tenaciously to them. The result is that most of their so-called reasoning consists merely of finding arguments for going on believing as they already do. Such is the very definition of fanaticism, and also of that logical fallacy called "solipsism."

Rational mind

On the other hand, the truly rational or scientific mind will hold any conclusion until all aspects or sides to any question are thoroughly investigated or verified. And when the facts prove to be contrary to what was originally held or assumed, then such assumption or original conclusion is either modified or even completely abandoned.

Many religious preachers, especially fundamentalists, speak as though they have talked to God themselves and therefore know exactly what he wants from us. "God wants you to do this," or "God does not want you to do that," they would shout from the pulpit.

Maybe it's true God has really spoken to them directly, but unless they can show incontrovertible proof that such a thing has taken place, it is extremely difficult for us to accept such a claim.

And because we really don't know the mind of God, but only presume that we do, it is best for us not to be dogmatic in our pronouncements and let facts or evidence speak for themselves. And speaking of facts or evidence, how do we know that a statement or testimony can be believed? Let us then use the criteria suggested by French philosopher Voltaire before accepting it. He said: "A testimony is sufficient when it rests on: First, a great number of very sensible witnesses who agree in having seen well; second, who are sane bodily and mentally; third, who are impartial and disinterested; fourth, who unanimously agree; fifth, who solemnly certify to the fact."

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my website at http://j.licauco.tripod.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

Challenging route of Pasig River heritage marathon

THE THIRD Pasig River Heritage Marathon will be held on Feb. 23.

Where most marathons use the out-and-back method (a long, straight course that returns to the starting point as its finish line), this marathon follows a circuitous point-to-point course, starting at Fort Santiago, Intramuros, and ending at Global City, Fort Bonifacio.

The marathon is a lesson in history and an advocacy for runners and the general public alike to heed the need of the Pasig River for continuous rehabilitation.

The event starts at 4 a.m. near the Manila Cathedral and Palacio del Gobernador.

Out of Intramuros, the runners turn right at the Anda Circle monument toward Del Pan Bridge. Near Manila North Harbor, the marathoners twist and turn into Barangay 286 to emerge in the country's first industrial zone, Muelle de la Industria.

They will pass early 20th century neoclassical buildings—El Hogar, SMS and the International Corporation Bank—before arriving at Manila's Chinatown, where they will be welcomed by the Chinese-inspired Arch of Friendship and Goodwill. Up Jones Bridge, they will cross over into the expanse of the Central Post Office Building, in revitalized Liwasang Bonifacio.

Past the clock tower of the Manila City Hall, the National Museum and the monument to the martyred priests Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos and Jacinto Zamora (Gomburza), they will pass through Rizal Park, where Dr. Jose Rizal was martyred.

As the marathoners turn left on Taft Avenue, they pass Sta. Isabel College and the Philippine Normal College.

Up and down McArthur-Sta. Cruz Bridge, the runners enter Plaza Sta. Cruz where the monument of Manila's colorful mayor, Arsenio Lacson, stands guard. With the old Sta. Cruz Church in the background, the runners snake into Raon and emerge near Quiapo Church. Then they swing up Quezon Bridge, which was designed by Gustav Eiffel of Eiffel Tower fame.

From Quezon Bridge, the runners turn left at Metropolitan Theater, toward the Arroceros Forest Park and the National Water Service Administration Building. They pass SM City Manila as they navigate Ayala Bridge and go into Tanduay district.

A right turn is made on Chino Roces Bridge, site of First Quarter Storm forays and hub of countless rallies of the present.

On Mendiola, the runners are flanked on the right by Centro Escolar University. On the left is San Beda College, with gothic spires on its church, which is dedicated to the Sto. Niño Jesus de Praga. Its interiors are adorned by Sistine Chapel-like paintings.

Past the College of La Consolacion and Holy Spirit, the runners then emerge at Mabini Bridge formerly known as Nagtahan Bridge. Four large bronze medallions of the national hero, rendered by National Artist for Sculpture Napoleon Abueva, stand guard.

The runners now enter Pandacan District where the oil depots are located.

The marathoners next cross the Jacinto Zamora Bridge which leads to Mandaluyong. Sevilla Bridge is next—the only bridge over the San Juan River, which is one of the two main tributaries of the Pasig.

Another notable spot along the marathon's route is Mandaluyong's Acacia Lane.

The next marathon landmark is San Felipe de Neri Church on Boni Avenue and Aglipay Street in Mandaluyong. It has a virtual twin, the older Sta. Ana Church near the route's Kilometer 21 across Lambingan Bridge.

After crossing Lambingan Bridge a second time, the runners enter J.P. Rizal in Mandaluyong. This leads to Coronado Street, a magnificent stretch along the banks of the Pasig, which connects Mandaluyong to Makati. Across the Makati-Mandaluyong Bridge, skyscrapers welcome the athletes on a brief foray into the country's financial and business capital.

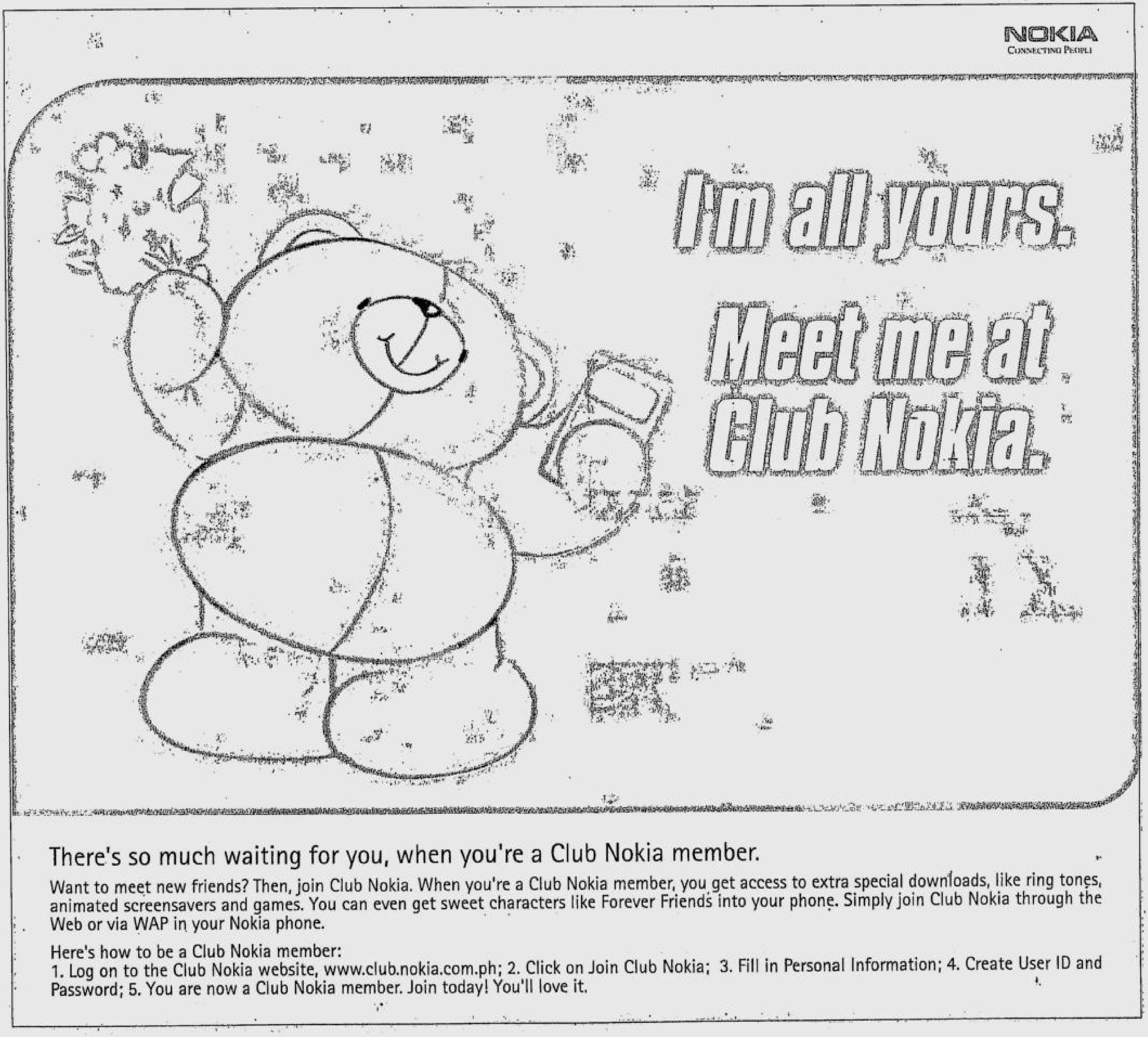
The runners then pass the Makati Museum, the Rockwell area and the Colgate-Palmolive offices. It's up Guadalupe Bridge next and onward to Edsa.

Then it's a right on Pioneer Street, where the marathon enters the Ortigas Center.

On Shaw Boulevard, the runners pass the Rizal Provincial Capitol compound then down past the silos of Pasig City and up the CP Garcia-C5 Bridge, the longest stretch of the race.

The Pasig River Heritage Marathon ends inside Fort Bonifacio, headquarters of the Philippine Army. The runners pass Libingan ng mga Bayani and the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial Park.

The marathon ends at Kilometer 42.195.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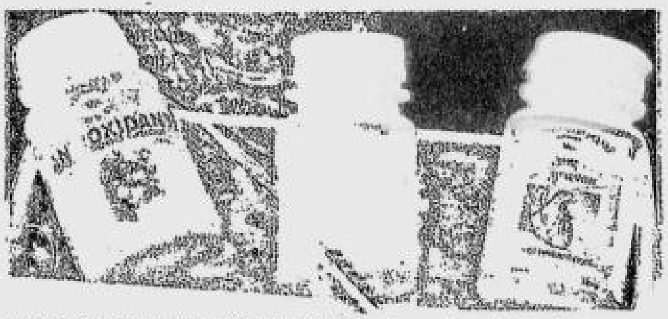
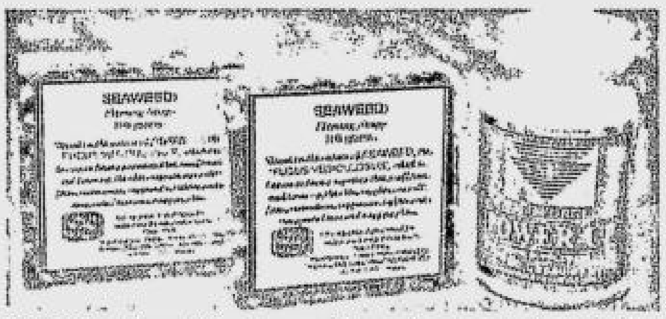
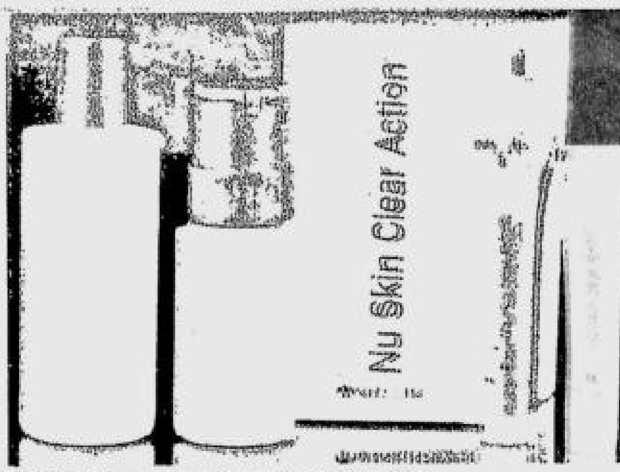
Garsworth Marketing, Inc. introduces C-Lium Fibre, a natural health fiber which comes from the dried seeds of psyllium husks (Psyllium Plantago), also dubbed as "the mother of all herbs" and "nature's highest source of dietary fiber." C-Lium Fibre helps eliminate constipation and regulate the digestive system. Call 524-6549 and 524-8146 or email c_lium@yahoo.com.



CM STAR Direct Sales offers natural food supplements such as Antioxidant, made from natural grape seed extract; Echenecia, which helps prevent colds, coughs, asthma and flu; CO Q10, which reduces risk of heart disease, including congestive heart failure, ischaemic heart disease and rheumatic heart; Dia-herbs, which lowers blood sugar and regulates it within the body system. Call 913-9066 and 912-5667.



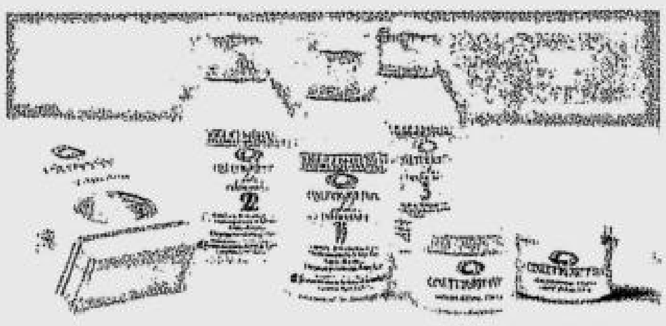
POWER Up offers a "slim down and firm up" promo starting Feb. 1 to March 31. For every Power Up bottle purchase, get one free Seaweed Firming Soap. Power Up is made from natural herbs that makes it a safe slimming capsule. Power Up is available at Mercury Drug Stores nationwide. Call 894-2386 and 892-4026, telefax 894-2387 or e-mail healthfood@netasia.net.



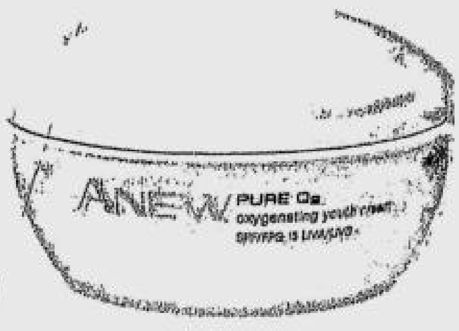
NU Skin Clear Action System is the first skin regimen to manage all phases of a blemish prone lifecycle. It is specifically designed to help clear the breakouts you have now, eliminate the scars of breakouts in the past and most importantly, protect you from having breakouts in the future. Nu Skin Clear Action works best with Foaming Cleanser, Toner, Day Treatment and Night Treatment. Call 689-0333.

WEEKLY DOSAGE

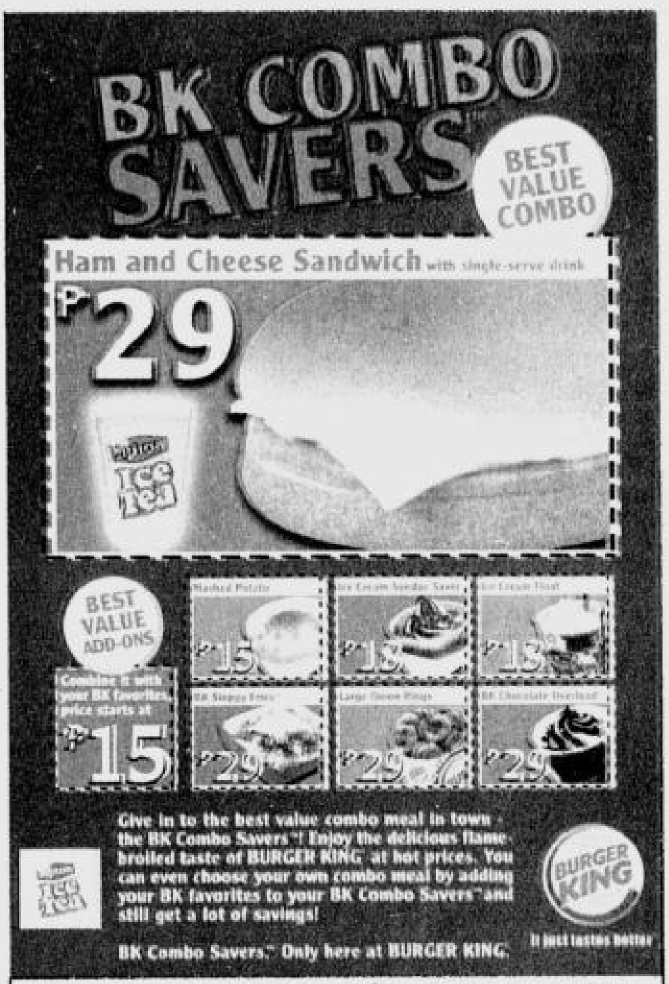
NU Skin packs the immediate fix and longer-term solution for cosmetic skin imperfections into Nu Colour Dual Active Color Corrector. It covers and corrects skin imperfections with a lightweight, natural finish that leaves skin fresh and radiant. Nu Colour is exclusively distributed by Nu Skin Philippines, Inc. Call 689-0333.



EXTRADERM exfoliant strips off dead skin cells to give way for the growth of new skin cells. Its special formulation of Vitamin A dries up pimples and removes blackheads and other skin blemishes. Extraderm also comes with a pimple-preventing clarifying lotion, a unique combination of astringent and germ-killer that thoroughly cleanses and evens your skin tone. Also, restore skin's lost moisture with Extraderm moisturizing cream. Its whitening cream with sunblock protects your skin from sun's harmful and damaging rays.



ANEW Pure O2 Oxygenating Youth Complex is available in a hydrating "lighter than air" gel-cream that is soft, weightless and immediately absorbed. This anti-aging complex combines incredible lightness with SPF 15 and UVA/UVB broad spectrum protection, and makes skin feel instantly revitalized and purified.
Anew Pure O2 is now available through the Avon Ladies nationwide and at Avon boutiques in Glorietta, SM Megamall, SM Southmall and Ali Mall.



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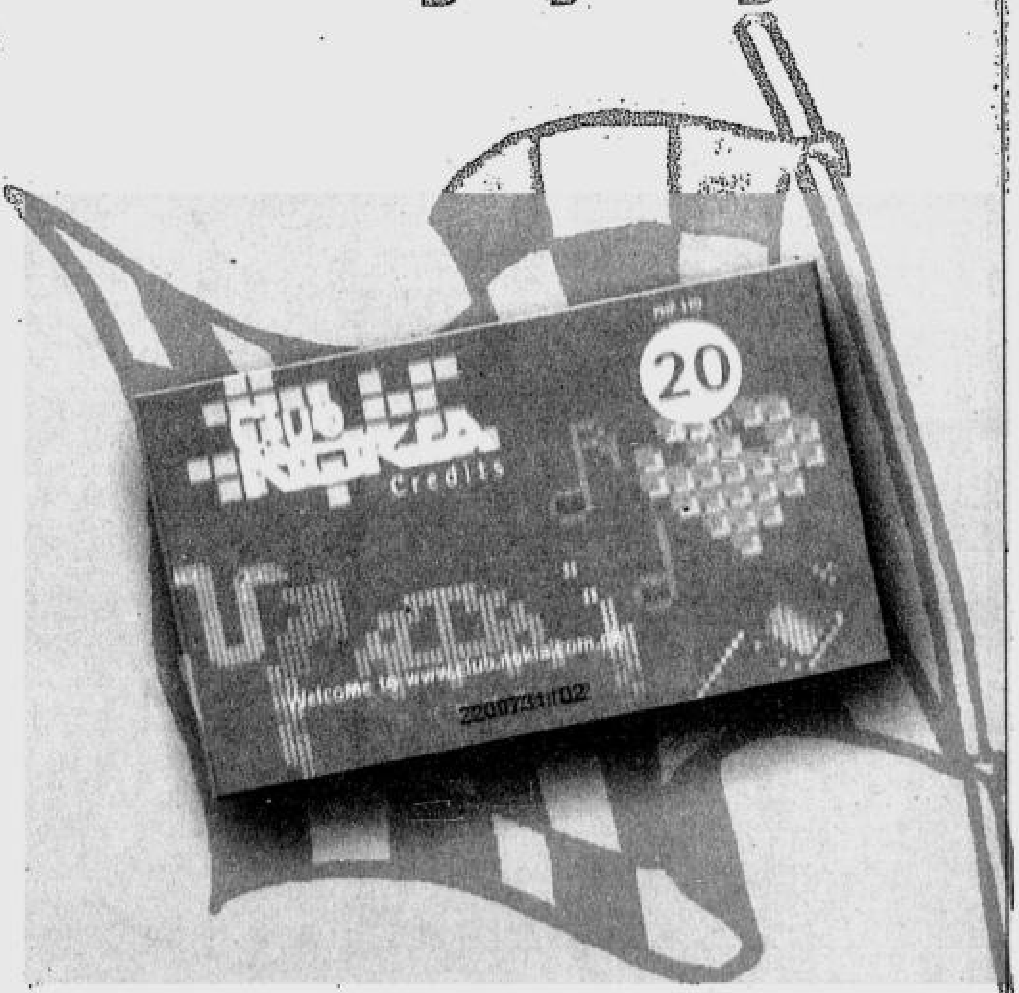

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ComicRelief

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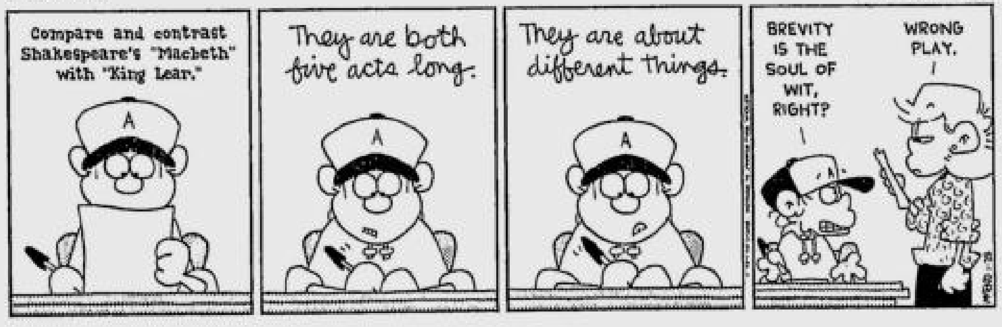
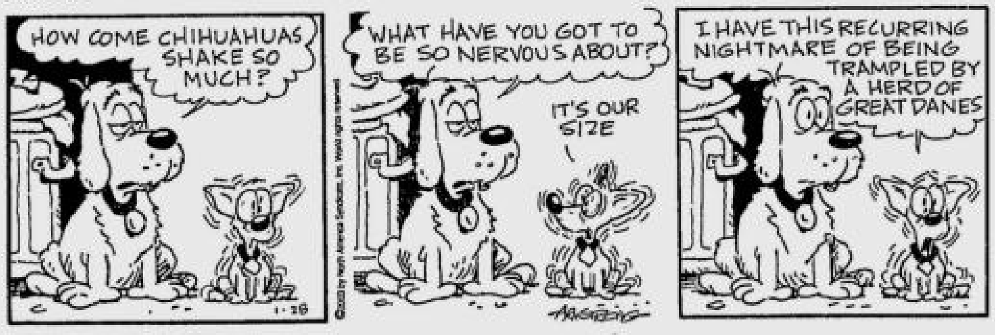
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


Compare and contrast Shakespeare's "Macbeth" with "King Lear."
They are both five acts long.
They are about different things.
BREVITY IS THE SOUL OF WIT, RIGHT?
WRONG PLAY.

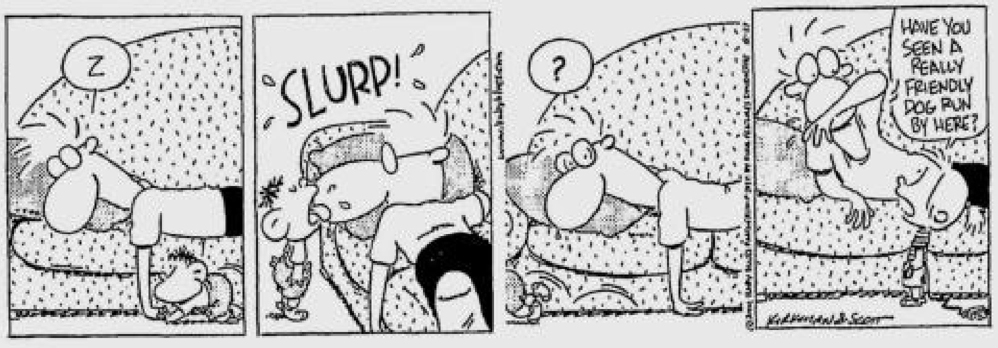
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


HOW COME CHIHUAHUAS SHAKE SO MUCH?
WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO BE SO NERVOUS ABOUT?
IT'S OUR SIZE
I HAVE THIS RECURRING NIGHTMARE OF BEING TRAMPLED BY A HERD OF GREAT DANES
1-28

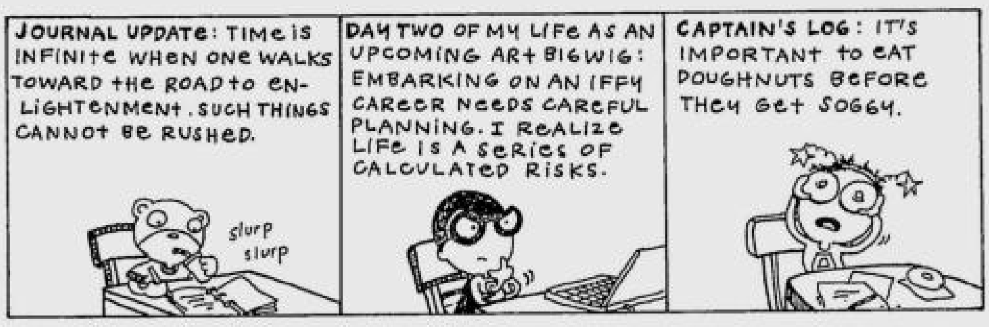
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


Z
SLURP!
?
HAVE YOU SEEN A REALLY FRIENDLY DOG RUN BY HERE?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


JOURNAL UPDATE: TIME IS INFINITE WHEN ONE WALKS TOWARD THE ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT. SUCH THINGS CANNOT BE RUSHED.
slurp slurp
DAY TWO OF MY LIFE AS AN UPCOMING ART BIGWIG: EMBARKING ON AN IFFY CAREER NEEDS CAREFUL PLANNING. I REALIZE LIFE IS A SERIES OF CALCULATED RISKS.
CAPTAIN'S LOG: IT'S IMPORTANT TO EAT DOUGHNUTS BEFORE THEY GET SOGGY.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Alan Alda, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Joey Fatone, Sarah McLachlan

Happy Birthday: You will have added energy that will enable you to follow through with your plans and complete what you start. Try to do most of the work yourself so you don't lose momentum. Your numbers are 5, 19, 22, 27, 35, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Your artistic talent will come in handy while doing things with children. They will be excited by your ideas and eager to participate. Finish off old projects before you begin new ones.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Children or an older relative may try to put added responsibilities on you today. Try to give sound advice, but don't bail them out by offering to pay for their mistakes.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Emotional relationships will be extremely passionate. Social activities will lead to interesting propositions and valuable new connections.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Use your head, although people you work or live with will be hard to handle and emotionally unpredictable. Be honest and direct.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Physical activities will be challenging and exhilarating. Join clubs and get involved in creative projects. Spread your wings and soar.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your day will be hectic due to family events. Don't spread yourself too thin, or discord will result. Take a little time for yourself.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Plan to visit friends. Help children with their projects. Explain the things they don't understand. It will be time well spent and rewarding.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will blow situations out of proportion when dealing with the one you love. Pause before you say something you'll regret. Losses are likely if you get involved with dubious individuals.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll be somewhat emotional concerning a rather private matter. Don't share your dilemma with anyone who has trouble keeping a secret. Keep your personal life to yourself.

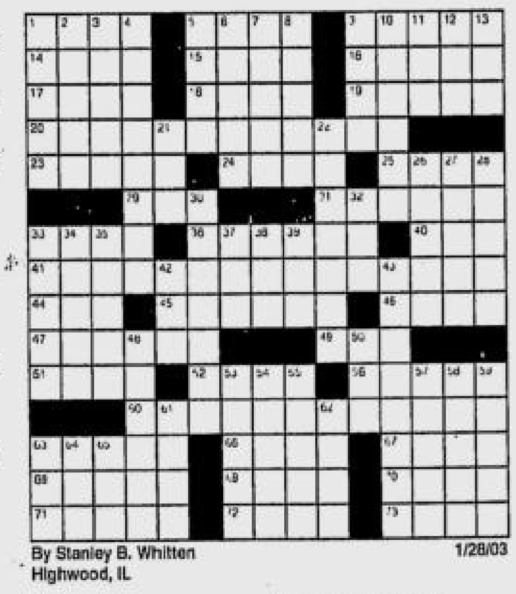
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Quiet, behind-the-scenes activities with the one you love should be the highlight of your day. Don't let worry about work interfere with your personal life. Make good use of your evening together.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Contribute to worthwhile causes. Problems surrounding inheritance, insurance or taxes should be looked at carefully. If need be, get legal advice.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Be aware of other people's feelings. You will be popular with acquaintances, but your lover could get insecure. A little effort will go a long way.

Birthday Baby: You will not be content to stand on the sidelines. You will be a doer and will strive to be at the center of everything. You will show leadership ability at a very young age.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

1/28/03

ACROSS
1 Pitcher's rubber
5 Border upon
9 In pieces
14 Pierre's noggin
15 Filmmaker Riefenstahl
16 Large mackerel
17 British nobleman
18 Toledo's lake
19 Beginning
20 MLB site opened 1916
23 Trap
24 Wildcat
25 Inter __ (among others)
29 Picnic pest
31 Outer cover
33 Extra dry
36 Spring back
40 Profit prophet?
41 62,000+ MLB site
44 Pay attachment?
45 Angst
46 Blues singer James
47 "Citizen Kane" director
49 Disney dwarf
51 Eyelid affliction
52 Burden
56 Drummer Starr
60 Former and "New" MLB site
63 Supersensory sense?
66 Poker token
67 Time unit
68 Figurative phrase
69 Present!
70 Thompson of "Wit"
71 Animal dens
72 Designer, born Romain de Tirtoff
73 Tears

DOWN
1 Goulash and ragout
2 Gain info
3 Open courts
4 Serbian capital
5 Toward shelter
6 Emerald's mineral
7 Bring together
8 Connect
9 Truant from the troops
10 Zoo favorites
11 Exclamations of contentment
12 Caviar source
13 Small child
21 Writer Deighton
22 Stirred up
26 Permitted by law
27 Contribution
28 Old World lizard
30 Window over a door
32 Ga. neighbor
33 Declares
34 Find a new tenant for a flat
35 Boot country
37 Compass pt.
38 Jeff. Davis' nation
39 CIA forerunner
42 Regret
43 Convert code
48 Scripture reader
50 Kid of jazz
53 Wall recess
54 Theater guide
55 Circumvent
57 Model Campbell
58 Cranky one
59 Gumbo vegetables
61 Units of resistance
62 Fencing sword
63 Part of RSVP
64 Actress Lupino
65 Caesar's dozen

Monday's Puzzle Solved

C	H	A	R	T	■	P	A	L	E	D	■	S	E	T
O	U	T	E	R	■	I	N	U	R	E	■	T	R	U
T	H	E	Q	U	I	E	T	M	A	N	■	I	O	N
■	■	■	■	S	C	R	I	P	■	T	I	L	D	E
E	T	H	O	S	E	S	■	■	M	I	D	L	E	R
P	O	U	R	E	D	■	S	E	E	S	A	W	■	■
E	S	S	E	S	■	P	L	A	N	T	■	A	L	E
E	C	H	O	■	G	R	A	S	S	■	O	T	I	S
S	A	P	■	A	L	O	N	E	■	W	R	E	N	S
■	■	U	N	R	E	S	T	■	C	H	A	R	G	E
E	M	P	I	R	E	■	■	C	H	A	N	S	O	N
M	A	P	L	E	■	P	L	E	A	T	■	■	■	■
O	B	I	■	S	I	L	E	N	T	N	I	G	H	T
T	E	E	■	T	R	E	N	T	■	O	W	N	E	D
E	L	S	■	S	E	A	T	S	■	T	O	U	R	S

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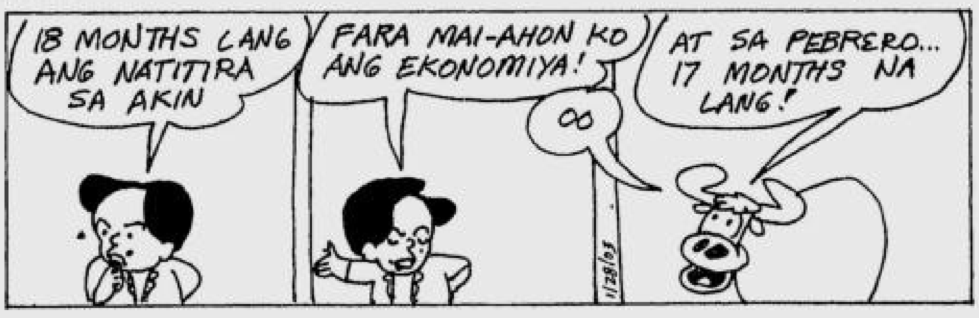
1/28/03

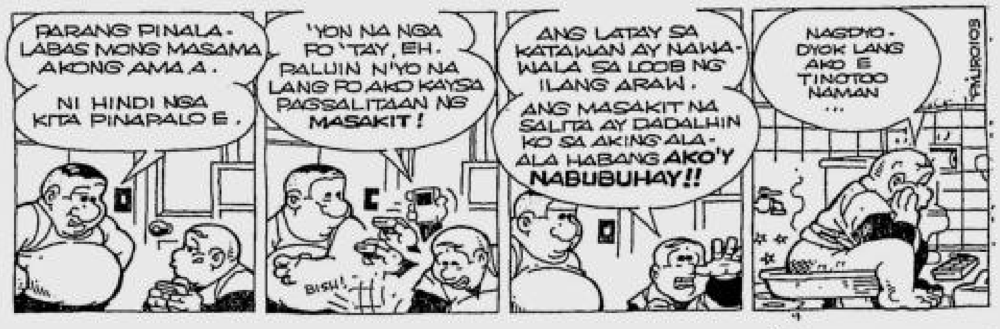
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


18 MONTHS LANG ANG NATITIRA SA AKIN
PARA MAI-AHON KO ANG EKONOMIYA!
∞
AT SA PEBRERO... 17 MONTHS NA LANG!
1/28/03

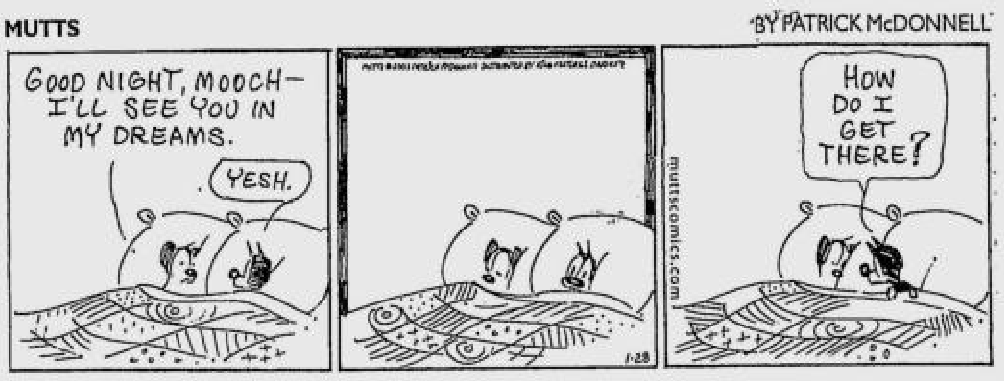
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PARANG PINALALABAS MONG MASAMA AKONG AMA A.
NI HINDI NGA KITA PINAPALO E.
'YON NA NGA PO 'TAY, EH. PALUIN N'YO NA LANG PO AKO KAYSA PAGSALITAAN NG MASAKIT!
BISH!
ANG LATAY SA KATAWAN AY NAWAWALA SA LOOB NG ILANG ARAW.
ANG MASAKIT NA SALITA AY DADALHIN KO SA AKING ALA-ALA HABANG AKO'Y NABUBUHAY!!
NAGDIDYOK LANG AKO E TINOTOO NAMAN ...

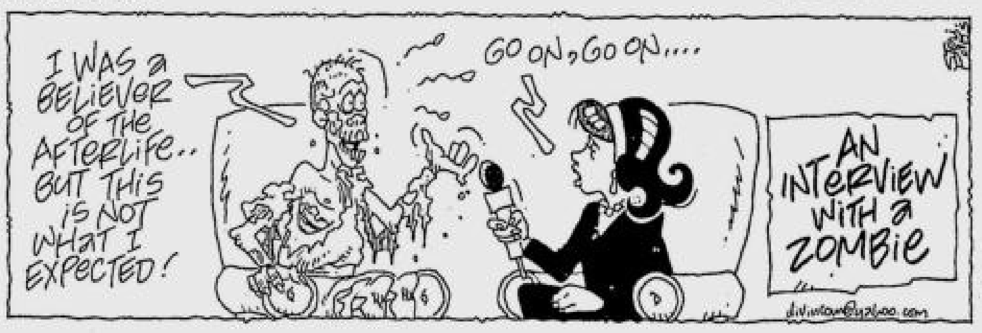
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


GOOD NIGHT, MOOCH— I'LL SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS.
YESH.
HOW DO I GET THERE?
muttscomics.com
1-28

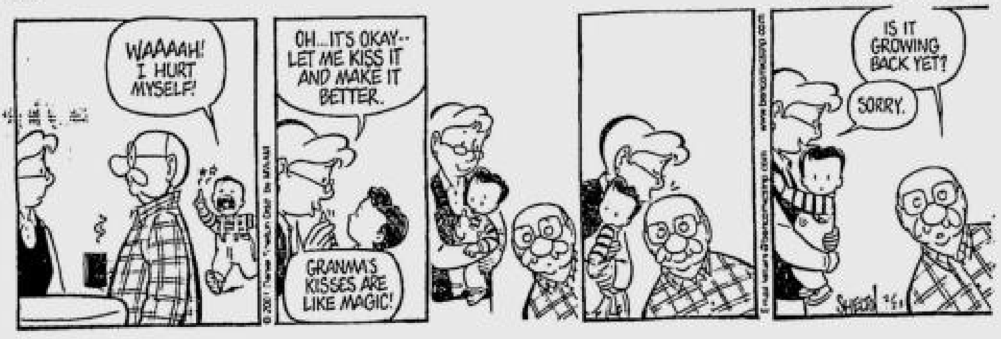
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


I WAS a BELIEVER OF THE AFTERLIFE.. BUT THIS IS NOT WHAT I EXPECTED!
GO ON, GO ON,...
AN INTERVIEW WITH a ZOMBIE

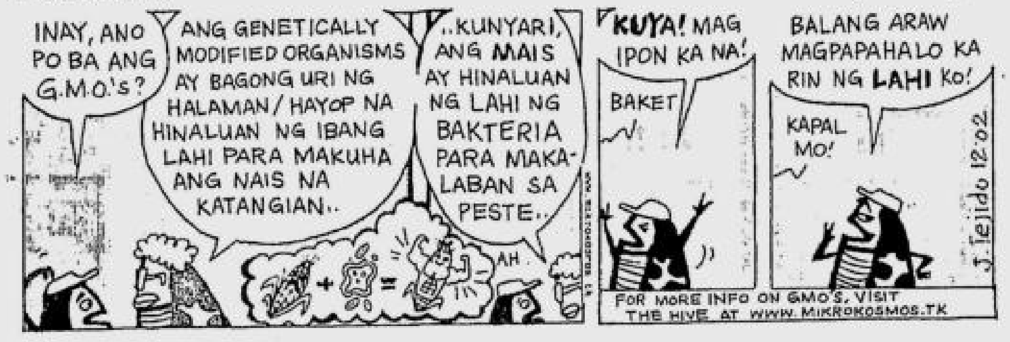
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WAAAAH! I HURT MYSELF!
OH...IT'S OKAY-- LET ME KISS IT AND MAKE IT BETTER.
GRANMA'S KISSES ARE LIKE MAGIC!
IS IT GROWING BACK YET?
SORRY.

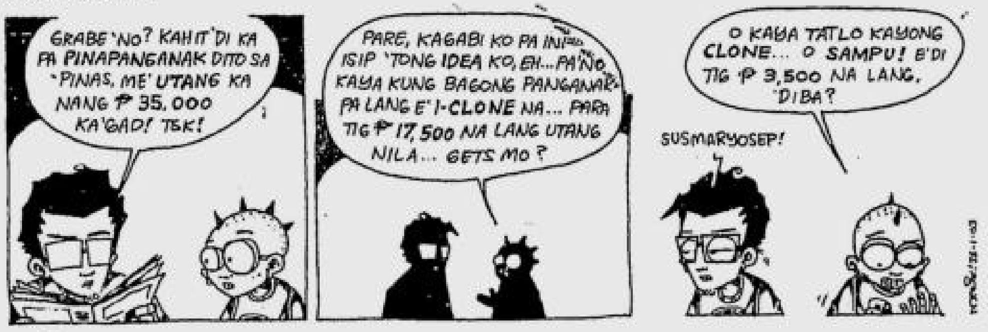
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, ANO PO BA ANG G.M.O.'s?
ANG GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS AY BAGONG URI NG HALAMAN / HAYOP NA HINALUAN NG IBANG LAHI PARA MAKUHA ANG NAIS NA KATANGIAN..
..KUNYARI, ANG MAIS AY HINALUAN NG LAHI NG BAKTERIA PARA MAKALABAN SA PESTE..
AH.
KUYA! MAG IPON KA NA!
BAKET
BALANG ARAW MAGPAPAHALO KA RIN NG LAHI KO!
KAPAL MO!
FOR MORE INFO ON GMO'S, VISIT THE HIVE AT WWW.MIKROKOSMOS.TK
J. Tejido 12.02

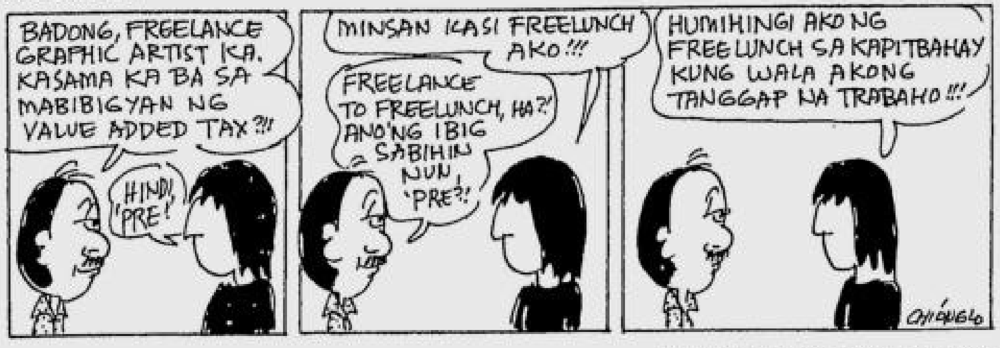
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE 'NO? KAHIT 'DI KA PA PINAPANGANAK DITO SA 'PINAS, ME' UTANG KA NANG ₱35,000 KA'AGAD! TSK!
PARE, KAGABI KO PA INIISIP 'TONG IDEA KO, EH...PA'NO KAYA KUNG BAGONG PANGANAK PA LANG E' I-CLONE NA... PARA TIG ₱17,500 NA LANG UTANG NILA... GETS MO?
SUSMARYOSEP!
O KAYA TATLO KAYONG CLONE... O SAMPU! E'DI TIG ₱3,500 NA LANG, 'DIBA?

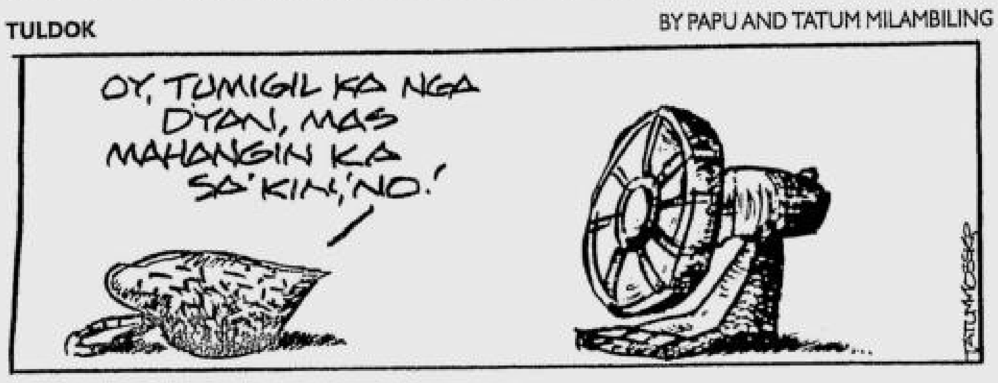
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


BADONG, FREELANCE GRAPHIC ARTIST KA. KASAMA KA BA SA MABIBIGYAN NG VALUE ADDED TAX?!!
HINDI, 'PRE!
MINSAN KASI FREELUNCH AKO!!!
FREELANCE TO FREELUNCH, HA?! ANO'NG IBIG SABIHIN NUN, 'PRE?!
HUMIHINGI AKO NG FREELUNCH SA KAPITBAHAY KUNG WALA AKONG TANGGAP NA TRABAHO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, TUMIGIL KA NGA DYAN, MAS MAHANGIN KA SA'KIN, 'NO!
TATUM MOSSER

It's back to drawing board to find relief for menopause

By Linda B. Bolido

FOR GENERATIONS of women, menopause, like pregnancy, was a fact of life. They accepted it as part of their womanhood, hardly talking—much less complaining— about it.

By the 20th century, however, menopause had become almost a disease to be dreaded and, more importantly, to be managed specifically by a regimen known as hormone replacement therapy (HRT). The therapy was designed to replace the hormones that menopausal women produced in steadily decreasing amounts.

The gradual drying-up of these hormones account for all those aches, discomfort and inconveniences menopausal women experience. HRT was also heralded as a "one-shot"... well, not really a cure, but some kind of a shield that would keep such medical "monsters" as heart disease, osteoporosis (a condition that makes bones more brittle, hence, more vulnerable to breakage), and cancer—conditions menopausal women were increasingly at risk from—at bay. The idea was to deal with the problems that menopause was expected to bring wholesale, rather than individually.

A doctor said one hoped for consequence of HRT was, by delaying all those problems related to menopause, an unmistakable sign that one was getting on in years, aging itself might be slowed down a bit.

The way HRT was promoted by advocates left one asking: If menopause was so bad, how did all those women since Eve manage to survive it and carry on with their even more arduous routines (compared to the 20th-century lifestyles with all the modern conveniences) with hardly anyone noticing that anything was amiss?

One need not even go back several generations to wonder if HRT is really indispensable to women. After all, with modern medical interventions costing as much as they do, most women—at least in the Philippines—still go through menopause unable to enjoy the relief promised by HRT. And yet there has not been any widespread clamor to make HRT accessible to majority of women.

And now it turns out that menopausal women who could not afford the much-heralded relief offered by HRT are not really missing out on a good thing after all. In one of the most dramatic falls from grace in modern medicine, HRT disappeared from menopausal women's wish lists last year as more recent studies revealed that it seemed to cause more problems than it solved. The Associated Press, in a yearend report, said the year 2002's biggest medical story was not something that helped people live longer and better.

> Proper diet and a more active lifestyle are just as useful in battling menopause blues as other medical conditions

"Many agree the most significant medical landmark of the year was the realization that a practice steadfastly accepted by a generation of doctors (and which they had 'sold' to thousands of women worldwide) does more harm than good," the AP story said. Dr. Joann Manson of Harvard's Brigham and Women's Hospital described HRT's fall from grace: "It's been the most dramatic sea change in clinical medicine that I have ever seen. Hormone replacement therapy has gone from being the norm to being shied away from."

Doing the opposite

What brought about HRT's downfall was a study conducted by the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), showing, among other things, that instead of slowing heart disease, a combination of estrogen and progestin used in the therapy increased the risk a bit. The therapy also seemed to raise slightly the risk of breast cancer.

The AP summed up the survey's findings: "The benefits of long-term hormone replacement therapy did not come close to outweighing the risks."

In a media round-table organized by Merck Sharp & Dohme Philippines (MSD), a subsidiary of the American Merck & Co. Inc., on "Understanding Women's Health Issues," what emerged was that HRT was primarily useful in relieving women of the uncomfortable and inconvenient manifestations of menopause—hot flushes, flashes and moodiness.

But even in this, there could be a downside to the use of HRT. Dr. Florante P. Gonzaga, professor emeritus of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of the Philippines Manila, who pointed out that the formulation widely used in the Philippines was the European "blend" and not the subject of the American study, explained that HRT was supposed to be used for a period of about five years starting a year or two before the onset of menopause, what is known as perimenopause.

But some women became so dependent on the therapy that they suffered from all the discomfort and inconveniences of menopause when HRT was stopped. One journalist admitted she had to resort to some version of the "cold turkey" to stop her dependence on HRT after the results of the WHI studies were released.

The round-table discussion served to highlight the fact that for both minor inconveniences and major health problems, women can do without the intervention as there are alternatives to HRT. But what the discussion reaffirmed was that today's mantra for good health—proper diet and a more active lifestyle—was just as useful in battling menopause blues as other medical conditions.

Mood swings, for instance, can be eased by relaxation exercises, meditation and massage while proper diet—low-fat, low-salt, among others—can lower the risk of heart disease.

Dr. Gonzaga would not completely rule out HRT for women. He said the therapy could still be helpful to some women for whom menopause was a truly trying time.

For others, however, who might have looked forward to breezing through menopause without feeling so much as a pinprick of pain and a second of discomfort, they would just have to resign themselves to adopting the stoic ways of their grandmothers and accepting this phase of their lives largely unaided by the miracles of modern medicine.

Other participants in the roundtable were Drs. Sandra A. Tankeh-Torres, a rheumatologist; Dante D. Morales, cardiologist; and Cesar S. Recto, cardiologist and MSD medical director.

DR. Florante P. Gonzaga, professor emeritus of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of the Philippines-Manila

DR. Sandra A. Tankeh-Torres, a rheumatologist, explains osteoporosis, a medical problem causing bones to become more brittle and more vulnerable to breakage.

DR. Dante D. Morales, cardiologist, talks about heart disease among women. Seated is Dr. Cesar S. Recto, another cardiologist and MSD medical director.

A close look at vitamins

KNOW the latest health news, information and discoveries with the January/February 2003 issue of the Healthy Options News Digest.

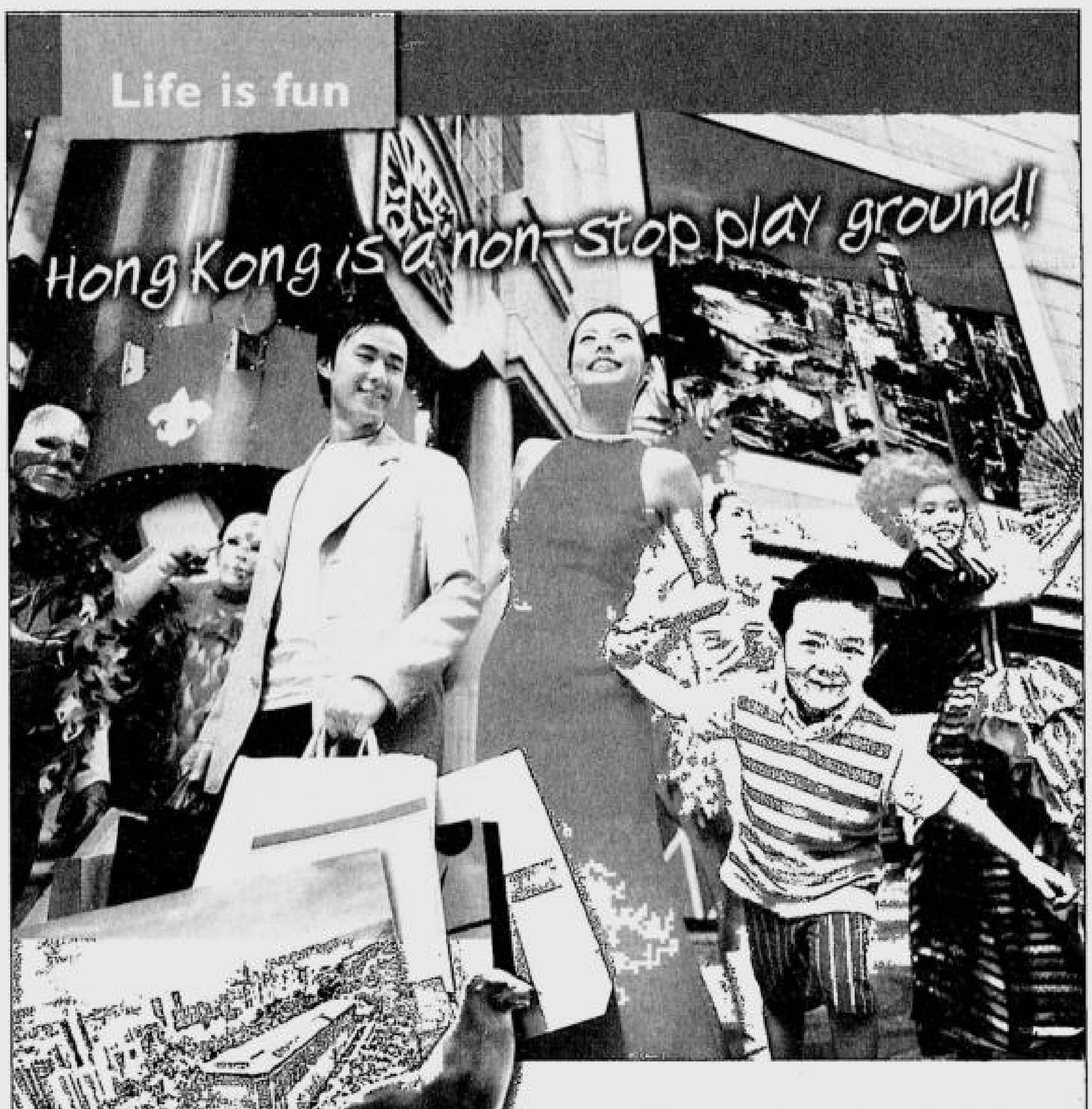
With the cover story, "Why Take Vitamins?", readers are in for an interesting assessment of vitamins. The story tackles the reasons for taking vitamins and minerals, their classifications, recommended intake and potency, and just what antioxidants, free radicals, vitamin C complex, bioflavonoids are, among other concerns.

The Medical News section also lets readers discern hype from reality in cancer-related issues. In "Vital Finds," find out how Dr. Nicholas Perricone's Three-Day Nutritional Face-lift can transform a lethargic and even nutritionally deprived being to a rejuvenated person by following the wrinkle-free eating plan.

In "Kitchen Remedy," find out how the cranberry can add vitality and health to the entire family. "Alternative Insights" offers a brief but enlightening excerpt on relieving and warding off heart problems.

Finally, a crown of healthy, lustrous hair can be yours, with some help from Jason Natural Cosmetics, which is featured on the back page cover.

The Healthy Options News Digest is available at Healthy Options, located at the following: 1/L of Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City; Rustan's Supermarket, Makati City; 2/L of Festival Supermall, Filinvest, Alabang; ground level of Ayala Center, Cebu City; lower G/F of SM City, North Edsa; 2/L of SM City Manila; Greenbelt, Ayala Center, Makati City; 2/L of SM Megamall B. EDSA, Mandaluyong City; SM City, Pampanga; and now at SM City, Bicutan.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Need a break? Then whet your appetite with some sumptuous dim sum and Cantonese cuisine. And end the fun on a high note at the Peak. Once you're there, don't miss The Peak Explorer virtual reality ride, Ripley's Believe It Or Not! Odditorium, and of course, the most breathtaking view of your holiday playground!

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Lose your temper and age faster

Angry outbursts mean avoidance of the real issues confronting one's life

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

THERE are many ingredients to staying young. But you should also know what makes you age fast.

While there are both physical and emotional factors involved, let's zero in on a major player in the emotional arena—anger. It has been established by neuroscientists that emotions cause physical manifestations, or biochemical reactions in the form of acid stomachs, indigestion, palpitations, elevated blood pressure, insomnia and loss of appetite.

Anger is considered as an iceberg—the visible top of an invisible structure below. What does anger do? It lashes out at a target—a person, a group of persons or even the universe. It is righteous and self-important and does not listen to, respect or care about others. Anger says others are wrong, inferior and inadequate. It wants what it wants, when it wants it, and on its own terms. Assuming the roles of judge, jury and executioner, there is no appeal.

Finding buried emotions

Discovering anger in yourself is akin to finding the ruins of a temple atop the desert sand. Dig deeper and you will find your buried emotions. Layer upon layer of experiences lie within—waiting to be uncovered and exposed to the sunlight of awareness.

Anger has its roots in fear. And the foundation of fear is pain. Fear is considered the birthplace of every impulse that is not loving. An angry, jealous, vengeful, depressed or selfish person is filled with fear.

Anger isolates the one who is angry from the real cause of anger. Angry outbursts only mean one thing: avoidance of the real issues confronting one's life—a denial of reality telling you that your life is not what you want it to be. And the sooner you face the problem, the more mature and peaceful your approach to the situation will be.

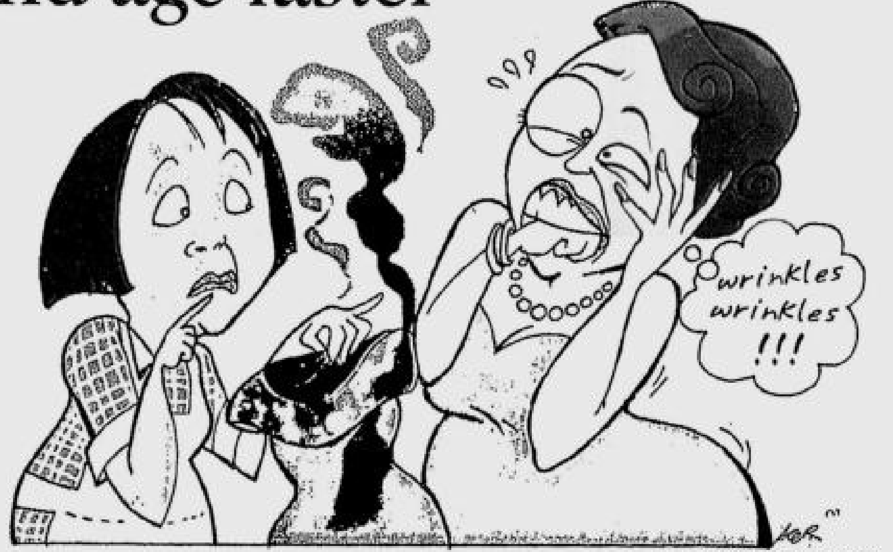
wrinkles wrinkles !!!

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Healing yourself

Challenging your anger is the start of the healing process. In truth, anger, rage and vengefulness never work. They are empty and futile defense mechanisms. Why? Because the world continues to be other than what you want it to be. Because obtaining revenge and proving guilt are acts of cowardice. And according to psychologists and life strategists, instead of trying to change others, change yourself. Such act will begin to transform your life.

Less rigid and less righteous you will become more accepting of others and yourself. And perhaps the most important result of all of this is you will frown less, smile more and grow younger every day!

Survival tips

If you feel the onset of anger, try doing the following:

- Let out a good scream.
- Down a glass of water.
- Talk to someone sympathetic.
- Write it down.
- Then tear it up.
- Or burn it.
- Or make a paper boat out of it and release it to the sea.
- Watch a funny movie.
- Go to the gym.
- Be in the company of friends.
- Eat your comfort food—whatever that may be.
- Pamper yourself. Go to a spa.
- Change your look. Have a nice makeover.
- Pray.
- Play with children.
- Do something good for somebody, including charity or civic work.
- Pull out weeds in your garden.
- Bake.
- And if you can't bake, cook.
- And if you can't cook, go to your favorite restaurant.
- Scrub the bathroom floor.
- Hug a pet (even if it is your pet python).
- Try something new—a new lipstick, perfume, necktie and especially a new attitude.
- Chant this affirmation: "I am one with peace, I am one with life."
- Have a good body scrub and exfoliate all the toxins and anger from your body.

Ingredients:
1 c rock salt,
1 c raw oatmeal
¼ c baby oil

Rub gently but firmly from feet to neck. Rinse and shower.

Remember that tomorrow will be a better day.

Love and light!

(Reference: "The Heart of the Soul" by Gary Zukav and Linda Francis)

'Nata de coco' may help heal cancer

THE COCONUT by-product, *nata de coco*, has done a great deal to a number of Filipinos suffering from cancer.

Concocted by Filipino scientist/researcher Antonio Agustin of Tarlac City, this coconut by-product named Cyeton-S, has given hope to a 36-year-old woman from Sapang Maragul, Tarlac City, whose breast cancer was in stage 4. For Ligaya Fuentes, who had a tumor the size of a baseball and which grew in the middle of her breasts, Cyeton-S came just in time. Told by doctors that she only had a month to live, this provincial lass is still alive. Her tumor has shrunk to the size of an egg and continues to shrink.

On the other hand, a 72-year-old *lolo* from General Santos City who was suffering from lung cancer, pulmonary infection, tuberculosis and high blood pressure, remains strong.

A lady from Cavite City named Juliet Dayrit, who benefited from the natural treatment, is now a leading exponent of Agustin's scientific discovery.

Agustin, whose newly discovered "anti-cancer" treatment via Cyeton-S, is also known for his other discoveries utilizing the country's natural coconut by-produce, dating as far back as 1988. Today, his combination of nature's best, produced Ultimo and the now-famous Boston-C, regarded as an effective detoxifier. To date, countless Filipinos (and even foreigners) can attest to the efficacy of these natural treatments, providing renewed hope and a better life for those who are suffering from various illnesses like kidney problems, stroke, cancer, emphysema and diabetes.

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